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# FUTURE PICKS

**To: CVM reader** **From: *Comics Values Monthly***

**This month *CVM* spotlights two of the most popular comic characters in comics today; Batman and Spawn. We speak to Todd McFarlane and Frank Miller about the upcoming Image release, *Spawn/Batman: Red Scare*, and to Denny O'Neil and his Bat-team, Doug Moench, Alan Grant, Chuck Dixon and Klaus Janson about DC's *Batman/Spawn: War Devil*. Both inter-company one-shots should be considered hot picks.**

**We continue to sizzle with an exclusive interview with rising star, Stephen Platt. In this interview, Platt talks about his move from Marvel to Image and his plans as resident artist on Extreme's *Prophet*.**

**Staying with Image, Art Thibert chats about his creator-owned project, *Black and White*. We take a look behind the scenes of this potentially hot title.**

**In addition, *CVM* does the convention circuit with a nostalgic look back at the earliest comics conventions and how they have developed to deal with today's competitive market. All this and our regular features including the second part of Marv Wolfman's "Writers Block" and a spectacular Spawn/Batman poster by Todd McFarlane.**

**Don't miss these upcoming *CVM* issues:**

**1) *CVM* #92 explores one of the most popular heroes from the Golden Age, Shazam, and DC's revival of the original Captain Marvel. This issue also explores the Sandman mythos and future, and takes a look at DC's Vertigo phenomenon, of which *Sandman* is a cornerstone. In addition, we check in on industry newcomers, Sanctuary Press and the Hildebrandt brothers, and the return of *Syphons* to Now Comics.**

**2) *CVM* #93 steams up your windows as we focus on two of today's hottest comic producers, Extreme and Homage Studios. We peer inside Extreme Studios to check in on their latest crossover for 1994, "Extreme Prejudice". The Image profile continues as we pay "Homage" to Jim Lee and Marc Silvestri's studio creations, exposing the covert activities and counter-intelligence reports with their latest crossover, *The Kindred*. Finally, we follow up on *CVM* #91's interview with Stephen Platt and find out how his plans for *Prophet* are developing. John Ostrander begins his first installment on "Writer's Block", and we include yet another "Extreme(ly) Imaginative" pull-out poster by the "Prophet(able)" by Stephen Platt.**

**3) *CVM* #94 focuses on the release of Art Thibert's regular monthly *Black and White* title. We also take a look at the future of Axis Comics, the new company that publishes *Tribe* by Todd Johnson and Larry Stroman. In addition, *CVM* explores the impact of women inside the comic industry, from the executive and editorial standpoint, to the role of women in the comics themselves. (Included here will be interviews with some of the more prominent women in the comic book field.) This month's pull-out poster is supplied by Art Thibert.**

**Yours sincerely,**

**Steve Thomas**
**Editor**

Big news this month comes with the March release of several potentially hot titles under the Image banner. Extreme Studios is gearing up for a major crossover event entitled "Extreme Prejudice." The comic book tie-in, which features the return of Quantum and the debut of characters Extreme, the Brotherhood of Man and the New Men, promises to pull all the studio's books together. The crossover kicks off with *Team Youngblood* #7 and runs through *Brigade* #8, *Bloodstrike* #9, *Supreme* #11, *Team Youngblood* #8, *Brigade* #9 and concludes with *Bloodstrike* #10. Following the event, the New Men will receive their own regular title featuring scripts by Eric Stephenson and pencils by Jeff Matsuda. *CVM* #93 will be there to cover the event in depth; Extreme fans will not want to miss it.

Meanwhile, this month, Stephen Platt talks candidly to *CVM* about his move from Marvel to Image and his future plans as resident artist on *Prophet*.

Over at Homage, Jim Lee and his colleagues are providing their own crossover, *Kindred*, featuring popular characters Grifter and Backlash. The miniseries promises to reveal more about the two heroes and their link to the top secret organization, Team 7 and I/O. Issue #1 will include a scratch-off Kindred trading card for a prize giveaway, and the first of four coupons redeemable for a Jim Lee Grifter/Backlash print. *CVM* #93 will be "scratching" at the door of Homage Studios to bring you more news prior to the title's release.

Staying with the theme of crossovers, Todd McFarlane and Frank Miller stand ready to release the hottest inter-company project of the year;

Armorines ™&© 1994 Voyager Communications

New Men ™&© 1994 Rod Liefeld/Extreme Studios

*Spawn/Batman: Red Scare.* The one-shot event brings together two of the most popular characters in comicdom; DC's Batman and McFarlane's Spawn. Miller and McFarlane promise a fast moving, action-packed story that is sure to attract a large following. The recent announcement of an increase in page count for the book to 56 pages, with an unchanged price tag of $3.95, also throws "value for money" into the equation.

Two weeks prior to the McFarlane/Miller project, DC releases their own version of "Batman meets Spawn" with *Batman/Spawn: War Devil.* DC's version splits up the writing chores between Batman scripters, Doug Moench, Chuck Dixon and Alan Grant, with Klaus Janson providing the pencils. With Batman editor, Denny O'Neil at the helm, this story is also guaranteed to be a success. Check out this month's *CVM* articles where creators on both Batman/Spawn one-shots speak out.

Elsewhere, or should that be "Elseworlds", DC capitalize on the success of the Dark Knight and friends with the upcoming *Catwoman Annual* #1. The "out of continuity" story pits a half woman, half-cat creature against 14th century Monarch, Ra's al Ghul and his "dark knight" son. If the book maintains the quality of story contained in former "Elseworlds" titles, it should be popular.

Other DC's worthy of note include; *The Ray Collectors Edition* #1, featuring the return of the Ray; *Star Trek Special* #1, with script by fan favorite Peter David and art by Star Trek artist Rod Whigham; *Showcase* #5, introducing the first of a three part Robin crossover; and *Green Lantern* #52, matching up the new GL with Mongul, and paving the way for a GL/Superman team-up in #53.

Switching over to the popular Vertigo imprint, *Hellblazer* #77 opens the doors to the highly anticipated six part "Rake at the Gates of Hell" storyline. In addition, Vertigo readers will want to pick up the four issue *Books of Magic* series, featuring the return of Tim Hunter (last seen in "The Childrens Crusade" crossover), and the *Rogan Gosh* one-shot with *Shade* talents Peter Milligan and Brendon McCarthy. (Check out next months *CVM* for Vertigo developments.)

Motorhead Special ™&© 1994 Dark Horse Comics, Inc.

Finally, under the DC banner, we give a brief mention to the popular Milestone books. Among the high quality line-up is *Icon* #13, which guest stars Static.

Having secured their mutant market share with the wedding of Jean and Scott in *X-Men* #30, Marvel continue to capitalize on their wedding windfall with two more invitations. The four issue *The Adventures of Cyclops and Phoenix*, by Scott Lobdell, Gene Ha and Al Vey, takes you on Jean and Scott's honeymoon in the future, where, charged with taking care of Nathan, they run into Rachel Summers and Apocalypse. This event marks a major turning point for the X-Men. Elsewhere, "Best Man" Peter David together with "Bridesmaids" Gary Frank and Cam Smith

invite you to Rick's bachelor party and Marlo's bridal shower in *Incredible Hulk* #417. Sober up in time for the wedding in #418 and the Wedding Album in the following Hulk Annual.

If you are looking for a bit of gossip, check out the 48 page *Namor* #50 where Subby's latest "squeeze" is revealed to be none other than Widow Richards.

For you future-freaks out there, Marvel add to their 2099 line with *Ghost Rider 2099*. Len Kaminski, Chris Bachalo and Mark Buckingham do the scripting and art on this future version of the spirit of vengeance.

A quick rundown of other Marvel moments include: *Daredevil Annual* #10, with Shang-Chi and the Black Widow following up on events from "Fall of Grace"; *Fury*, featuring Wolverine, Iron Man and the origin of Nick Fury and S.H.I.E.L.D.; and new titles, *Spider-Man/X-Factor: Shadowgames* and *Venom: The Mace*.

Malibu's Ultraverse imprint continues to pick up steam with the release of *Rune (Ultraverse Premiere #1)* #3. This 64 page flip-book introduces *Ultraverse Premiere* which will feature stories by various talents as well as introducing new Ultraverse characters.

In other Malibu departments, Malibu Comics releases the manga title *Project A-Ko*, based on the hit animated series, and Rock-It-Comics sounds out *Megadeth*, bass(ed) on the band's song "Sweating Bullets".

Dark Horse's Legend continues to grow with the addition of the four part *John Byrne's Next Men: Power*, and Mike Mignola's *Hellboy: Seed of Destruction*, which also includes chapter 1 of the origin of Monkeyman and O'Brien by Art Adams.

Other Dark Horse delights include; *Joe R. Lansdale's By Bizarre Hands*, featuring short stories by the master horror writer; Comic's Greatest World's latest entry, *Motorhead Special*, with appearances by Barb Wire and Wolfgang; and manga offerings, *Appleseed Databook* and *Bubblegum Crisis: Grand Mal*.

Topps continue their "Blood and Bones" storyline in *Cadillacs and Dinosaurs* #2 which also includes a back-up story entitled "Liferaft" and a sequel to Mark Schultz's "Green Air". Two other Topps titles worth checking out are *Zorro* #3, with the introduction of Lady Rawhide, and *Exosquad* from the television cartoon series.

Valiant have dropped a few points of late, but *Armorines*, by Jorge Gonzalez, Jim Califiore and Rodney Ramos, may very well buck the trend. Still considered 20/20 by many fans, is *Solar, Man of the Atom* in "Valiant Vision". Peter Grau is leaving *Solar* to pencil *Secret Weapons*, along with Joe Rubinstein on inks and Maurice Fontenot scripting. The new creative team are part of a new direction on the title beginning with *Secret Weapons* #11. Shipping in April, this issue will feature at least four new characters with Bloodshot assuming the mantle of team leader.

Ghost Rider 2099 ™&© 1994 Marvel Ent. Group

Jim Shooter continues to mold the Defiant universe with his latest offering, *Charlemagne*. Written by Philip Nutman and drawn by Adam Pollina and Mike Witherby, this new regular title introduces Charles Smith, the most powerful hero in the Defiant universe.

Two other titles worth a mention are *Syphons*, featuring the return of Now's first ever superhero team, and Sanctuary Press' *Xenya*, signaling the first ever venture into comics by Tim and Greg Hildebrandt. *CVM* will be checking in on both Now Comics and Sanctuary Press next month.

Finally, we offer up a list of other publisher product that doesn't usually make the Headlines: Alpha Productions offer up new stories with Joe Staton on *E-Man Returns*; Antarctic Press releases *A Science Affair*, a *Ninja High School/Gold Digger* crossover and a new *Ninja High School* spin-off entitled *Quagmire*; former Atomeka guys Blackball, present Simon Bisley's "Blitz vs Trencher" by Keith Giffen in *Blackball Comics* #1; Caliber's *Negative Burn* #9 includes contributions by Alan Moore and Dave Dorman, while Bruce Zick brings back *Zone Continuum* (with an eight page Zone primer); Jeff Smith's popular *Bone* from Cartoon Books starts off a new storyline with issue #13; *Avant Guard* is Day One Comic's new superhero team debut comic; Empire Comics premieres their new title *Shi*; Express Publications explores Zen's pre-Earth space adventures in *Zen Intergalactic Ninja: Starquest*; Fantagraphics continue their popular mature titles with David Clowes' *Eightball*, Peter Bagges's *Hate* and Jamie Hernandez' *Love and Rockets*; Genesis West lays down the foundation for Image's *Phantom Force* releases with *Phantom Force* #0; Harris serves up *Harsh Realm* and the veggie dish *Snak Posse*; Heroic Publishing provide one of their major villains with her own series in *Black Enchantress*; Majestic, the creators of *Legacy*, continue their universe with *Heroes Like Us*; John Bolton and Nick Vince participate in Millennium's horror anthology, *The Edge*; Sky Comics reach out with *Morgana X*, *Tempered Steel* and *Seeker*; Viz mete out more manga in the form of *Lycanthrope Leo*; and Warp Graphics release *Jink*, the pre-*Elfquest* character.

Stay tuned for more Future Picks next month.

# ROB LIEFELD

# JIM SHOOTER

# YOUNGBLOOD '94

## 'NUFF SAID!

# SPAWN/BATMAN

*by S.C. Ringgenberg*

For Todd McFarlane, the talented writer/artist behind *Spawn*, and one of the founding fathers of Image Comics, the challenge is not getting to the top of the comic book sales heap. McFarlane's demonic avenger is already there. For those of you who haven't noticed it yet, *Spawn* is regularly one of the two or three top-selling titles in the direct sales market.

No. for Todd McFarlane, the real challenge is staying on top. In this time of shrinking markets and expanding superhero universes, it seems like every comic requires a gimmick to sell. a hologram cover, a foil cover, a die-cut cover Maybe your gimmick is remaking an old established character to conform to current trends, or including a free pull-out poster or a trading card. Killing off established characters is a popular marketing ploy, as the sales of "The Death of Superman" storyline will attest. Another less widely used gimmick (for obvious reasons) is simply to be so talented that people will buy your comics no matter where or when they come out, as is the case with Dave Steven's *Rocketeer*, or *Xenozoic Tales* by Mark Schultz.

In bringing out a Spawn/Batman crossover comic from Image in tandem with DC's Batman/Spawn crossover this March, McFarlane is clearly committed to charting his own path in the comics industry. One recent example of McFarlane's ingenuity in attracting attention to *Spawn* is his insistence on not employing any of the gimmicks that are currently flooding the market. "When there's a glut in the market, it's tough to survive out there," McFarlane observed. "After half a year every now and then you've gotta send up a flag and go: 'Yoo-Hoo! I'm over here in the corner, don't forget about me.'"

McFarlane couldn't very well kill off *Spawn* to create attention since Spawn had already died, gone to Hell, and returned. So, earlier this year when McFarlane decided it was time to stir up some excitement around Spawn, he opted to bring in not one, but four partners in crime to guest-write four issues of the title. McFarlane's all-star roster of talent included *Cerebus* creator Dave Sim, *Watchmen* and *Swamp Thing* scribe Alan Moore, *The Sandman*'s Neil Gaiman, and *Daredevil* and *Dark Knight* scripter Frank Miller. Bringing in these writers, McFarlane elaborated, "was my way of drawing attention to the book without having to put foil on it like everybody else is doing. I'm not saying that [these enhancements] are right or wrong, although I don't like the fact that they have to raise the price,"

On the subject of gimmicks McFarlane pointed out, "If nobody was doing foil [covers], I would've. I'm always looking for ways to do something different. And it's served me well in my career so far. I think, how can I get attention on my book without doing the same thing everybody else is doing?" So, even when McFarlane is involved in

creating a crossover book with characters from two different companies, he's going to put his own spin on it. "The Spawn/Batman crossover has got two books coming out simultaneously, but they don't cross over with each other. [With our project], I'm able to bring in Frank Miller to do a character that he hasn't done for years and years. So it becomes a little different than the standard crossover comic book," he concluded.

The Spawn/Batman project is remarkable in several aspects. For one thing, no one has ever tried to do two parallel crossover books in which characters from different companies team up in stories that have virtually no connection with each other. Each Spawn/Batman comic is a self-contained project.

It's also remarkable in that it marks the return of both Frank Miller and Todd McFarlane to Batman. Miller, of course, garnered a great deal of attention and critical acclaim with his reworkings of the Batman legend. *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* and *Batman: Year One* were both hugely successful and highly influential on all subsequent depictions of the Caped Crusader. McFarlane, for his part, drew three well-received issues of *Batman: Year Two*, but hasn't had a crack at the character since.

McFarlane had approached DC's Paul Levitz early in 1993 with the idea of doing a Spawn/Batman crossover book, but he wanted to ensure that his project would be especially interesting to both the fans and the DC brass, so he decided to pitch the idea to Frank Miller first, in the hopes that Miller would agree to write it. McFarlane joked that he contacted Miller, "out of fear", adding, "This was going to be a pretty big project and I didn't really know whether I was up to it. I'm known for my art, but I don't know that I can write a story that goes down in history. So, out of fear I go, well, I'll take one crack at getting Frank and if he says no, then I'll just do it myself. And luckily, he came around."

Once McFarlane had enlisted Miller and made a deal with DC, then came the real work of turning his idea into a salable commodity. He realized that a strong story had to come first. "I didn't know that Frank was ever going to say yes," McFarlane pointed out, "So I had some ideas myself. I threw some of them out at Frank, but essentially, when people work for me, I like to give them as much freedom as possible. I threw some ideas at Frank and told him, "You can use any, all, or none of them, I don't care. And that's exactly what he did. He brought in his story, I wanted to do it, and that's just what ended up happening. He just did his thing and I'm just happy to be a part of it."

Of course, to hear McFarlane tell it, his original motivations for doing *Spawn/Batman* were somewhat devious, not to say Machiavellian, rather than being purely mercenary. "I had this evil scheme with Frank Miller," he joked. "I phoned him because I was talking to him about maybe doing *Spawn* #11. And I go, 'What if I could come up with a way for you to do Batman but you didn't have to work for DC Comics. You would write it and draw it and pencil and ink it and you wouldn't have to listen to anybody?' Now at this point, like a lot of people, he just thinks I'm thinking far too much. But what I ended up doing is thinking about it more and more. See, the original joke went something like: I get this deal. We kill Spawn in the first page. Oh, beauty! Now we've just got Batman. I break my arm on the second page and Frank Miller gets to write, pencil, ink and draw this cool Batman project because that is what I would want to see: Batman and Frank Miller all over again. But since it wouldn't be that easy and somebody would probably catch us halfway through it, the more I thought about it, I'd say, 'Ah, we could never pull this off. It was just a bad joke anyway, Frank.' But then I thought about it and I'd go: We're never going to be able to just get a Batman book all to ourselves, but we could probably get the next best thing. So, I phoned DC Comics," he continued, "and offered that they do one book, I do one book, we swap characters, and we both kind of do our own gig and see who puts out the best book. At that point, I'm able to turn that around to Frank and say, 'Frank have I got a deal for you. It's not quite as good as what I told you a couple of months ago, but it's

**Spawn/Batman Pencils by Todd McFarlane**

Spawn ™&© 994 Todd McFarlane Batman ™&© 994 DC Comics

not so bad.' After thinking about it, he decided that it would be kind of a cool thing to do."

Frank Miller's involvement in *Spawn/Batman* is a typically shrewd move by McFarlane, for not only does it guarantee that the project will be well-written, but it will also attract Miller's legions of fans. When asked how he became involved in the *Spawn/Batman* saga, Miller's answer was disarmingly simple. "Todd asked me," he replied, adding, "You'd be amazed how often projects begin that way, when someone calls you up and asks and you get along with them well enough and you like their work well enough that a story comes out of it."

Miller and McFarlane had "barely met face to face", said Miller, "before he introduced himself at a convention in Portland a few years back where we spoke briefly. Later on, he sent me copies of the work he was doing and we got talking." Those conversations led to Miller writing *Spawn* #11, an assignment Miller said he approached, "trying to do essentially just a [regular] issue of *Spawn*. I had read over everything he'd done and tried to keep it in tune with what he did."

For McFarlane, asking Miller to write a story featuring Spawn and Batman was an obvious choice. "I don't think you can be a fan of Frank's without ever having read his Batman stuff," McFarlane commented. "It was one of his benchmarks. And in terms of marketing that's a hell of a plus. *Spawn/Batman* and McFarlane is always going to sell, but for me to throw in that one little Jab: 'Oh, by the way, Frank Miller's writing it.' That Just solidifies the project."

The enthusiasm of the two collaborators for this novel project seems to guarantee it will be high-powered entertainment. "There's going to be two cool books coming out in March," explained McFarlane. "Essentially they're stand-alone books They don't cross over with each other or anything. So, you could buy one or the other. But to me, the competitive edge of trying to outdo [DC's book], is what will try and get me to produce a better product. And hopefully, [DC] will have the same competitive edge and try to outdo our book. The end result will be two good books."

Miller echoes McFarlane's enthusiasm, obviously relishing the chance to collaborate with one of the industry's top artists. "What I find exciting about a collaboration is that I play to the other person. It's like we're having a game of handball, and it always affects the kind of story I write and how I write. And so the first throw of the ball is from me, when I throw them a plot that I believe plays to their strengths. In the case of Todd," he continued, "we haven't worked together as much as Dave Gibbons and I have, but I write to the kind of frenetic energy his pages have. There's a vitality to the stuff that's very exciting. So, for instance the Spawn/Batman I'm writing doesn't have much in the way of slow moments. You never see Spawn and Batman sit on a rooftop and talk about their childhoods."

McFarlane is also plainly excited about meeting the challenge of depicting two protagonists who are very different both in style and substance. "Spawn and Batman's capes are each going to have their own personality. On the Spider-Man stuff I did, the webs had personality. I try to give a lot of stuff

**Spawn/Batman Pencils by Todd McFarlane**

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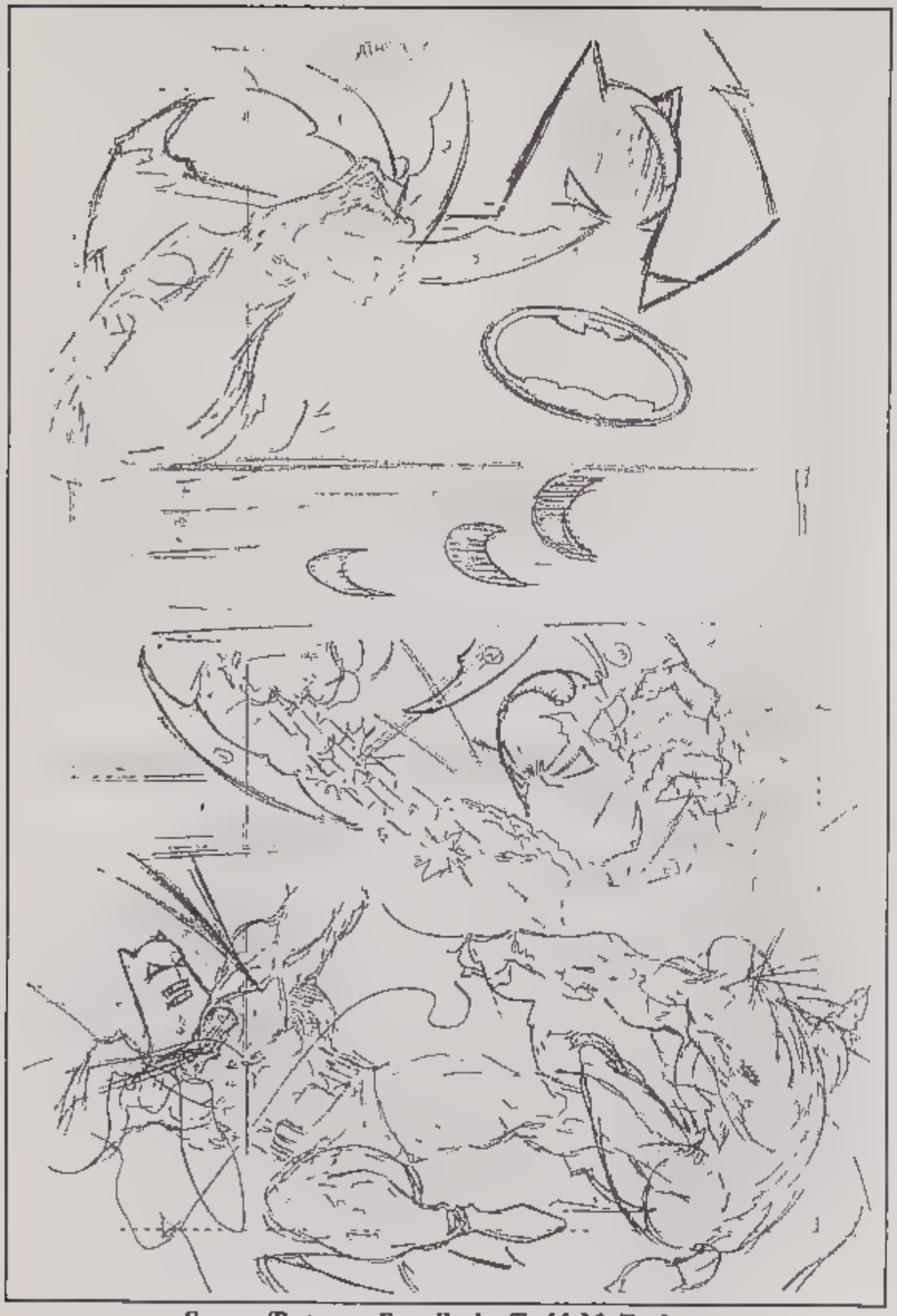

***Spawn/Batman Pencils by Todd McFarlane***

Spawn ™&© 1994 Todd McFarlane  Batman ™&© 1994 DC Comics

that's not part of the human body a kind of life of its own."

As for the plot of *Spawn/Batman*, McFarlane didn't want to give too much away. "Frank wants to give you an action comic book. He doesn't want to do anything deep and philosophical, so we start it off right in the middle of a fight and it basically takes off from there with Batman. If you've seen some of the stuff that Frank has done with *Sin City*, he likes action. He likes to keep the pace of the stuff going quick, quick, quick, and he doesn't want to rest in order to go into these long, eloquent speeches and testimonials."

While the Miller/McFarlane collaboration will boast plenty of the kind of hard-hitting action fans have come to expect from these two gents, according to McFarlane, it won't pit the two superheroes against super villains. "There's no Joker, there's no Violator and stuff like that because we didn't want them to fight costumed characters. We wanted to keep this kind of grounded to an urban setting of two guys running around on building tops chasing terrorists. I think a lot of the Frank Miller touches are going to come across in some of the dialogue and snappy patter."

In doing the two simultaneous Spawn/Batman titles for Image and DC Comics, McFarlane sees the parallel projects in terms of healthy creative competition. "DC doesn't really have say-so over how I do it in terms of packaging, in terms of paper, in terms of production, in terms of who I hire on the book, and vice versa. That's part of the race. You do yours and I'll do mine. I get to pick my tennis shoes and you pick your tennis shoes. If we get too crazy," he continued, "they'll crack the whip on us and I'm sure they'll sit there and go: 'Not bad! Not bad! but we got this,' and I'll go: 'Not bad, but we got this.' And so we'll be going back and forth trying to outdo each other. Our book is $3.95, theirs is $4.95, so I already got out of the blocks. I'm already one step ahead. I beat em in price. You've got to do anything to survive out there in the marketplace."

With regard to DC's Batman/Spawn comic book, McFarlane is somewhat indifferent. "I'm not here to make their book any better or any worse. I'm just here to say: 'Don't kill my guy.' So, even if I saw something I didn't like, I wouldn't necessarily change it. I'd just go, 'I love it!' Because why would I want to make their version better than mine? So I just keep sending [the work] back and going, 'I love it!' and they think I'm the easiest guy to work with."

Though they consulted with Denny O'Neil, DC's Batman editor, and have read the script written by DC's creative team, McFarlane and Miller were basically free to create an adventure in which the Dark Knight and his undead partner could believably interact. "The two characters meet," said McFarlane, "because of an illegal arms shipment that's coming into America that's got some kind of military background to it. Al Simmons, who's Spawn, used to be in the military. [The shipment] somehow draws him to New York, where he, and Batman form an unholy alliance to solve the problem."

Miller described the Spawn/Batman relationship as being "like a buddy movie gone wrong," adding, "The story was my idea. Todd had approached me having an insightful angle on how the two characters, would relate to each other. He pointed out that Bruce Wayne was very much a man of privilege and

that Spawn was a total loser in terms of how things work in the world. Bruce Wayne is handsome and rich and Spawn is impoverished and hideous. I took that in mind and constructed a story, coming up with an opponent that would give them cause to have something to do with one another, but also using what Todd had suggested about the contrast between the characters. I said the best way to treat it would be to break the rules of these crossover books and make the two actively dislike each other for the entire story."

McFarlane added, "We have a cool ending to [the book] that we insisted on keeping. DC had a bit of problem with it when they read the plot but we were able to keep it because it was funny. I mean I think it's funny. Maybe other people won't. Instead of them going out hand and hand into the sunset, we wanted to end it with a little bit more pizazz."

While Miller had written his story for *Spawn* #11 as a full script, for the *Spawn/Batman* crossover, he had, at McFarlane's request, written his script Marvel-style, wherein the writer submits a detailed plot broken down into one-page increments. The artist then pencils the story from these written breakdowns and sends copies of the pencils to the writer, who will tailor the dialogue and captions to the art. A versatile writer, Miller claims to have no preference, saying, "I'll work any way I've worked with a lot of people. Everybody's got their preferences and it really all depends on who you're working with and what they're more comfortable with. For instance, with Dave Gibbons we work full script, which he's very comfortable with and so am I. Because he brings so much to the art, I know that I can write all of the dialogue in advance and he'll make all the actors look exactly right and make me believe in the situation. I mean, he'll tell the story beautifully. Other people have a more freewheeling approach. Like myself, for instance. I don't write myself a full script. I tend to play around with the visuals a lot and come up with the words to reinforce them."

In *Spawn/Batman*, Miller initially has Batman working in his familiar mode of clue-gathering detective, but wastes no time getting the story under way. As Miller noted, "I only have forty-some pages in this* and this is my first crack at doing Batman in his prime. I'm eager to show what my version is of Batman when he's, oh, somewhere around thirty-one, when he has all of his faculties together. He's not the talented bungler that he was in *Batman: Year One*, nor the arthritic character that he was in *The Dark Knight*," he concluded with a laugh.

The dynamic emergence of Image and other new publishers opens up a wealth of creative possibilities for top creators like Miller and McFarlane. "It's a fun time to be doing comics," Miller said contentedly. "I think that one of the things that makes comics a very, very exciting field is that we've had only limited success as a marketplace. There's sort of a headlong rush to be more and more like Hollywood that I think could turn out to be foolhardy. I've worked in Hollywood and there are, especially now, censorious restraints and so much money at stake that people don't think straight. Whereas in comics, it's really amazing how little it costs to make one and how few people are involved. And what a receptive audience there is out there I think everybody got a little crazy after Image showed up with superhero universes right and left. That's when the speculators moved in. Now that the speculators are moving back out again, I expect sanity to prevail."

But however creatively or financially satisfying their collaboration turns out to be, Miller and McFarlane will certainly be satisfied in one respect. "Frank and I are like kids," McFarlane admitted. Because deep down, with all the crap - and we're always barking at the establishment - deep down we're just like little superhero comic book fans. We get to do Batman and we don't have to phone up DC Comics. It's kind of like we got away with something."

**Spawn/Batman Pencils by Todd McFarlane**

Spawn ™&© 1994 Todd McFarlane Batman ™&© 1994 DC Comics

**Spawn/Batman* has been increased to 56 pages. The cover price remains at $3.95.*

# Lightning Strikes Again!

JANUARY 1994

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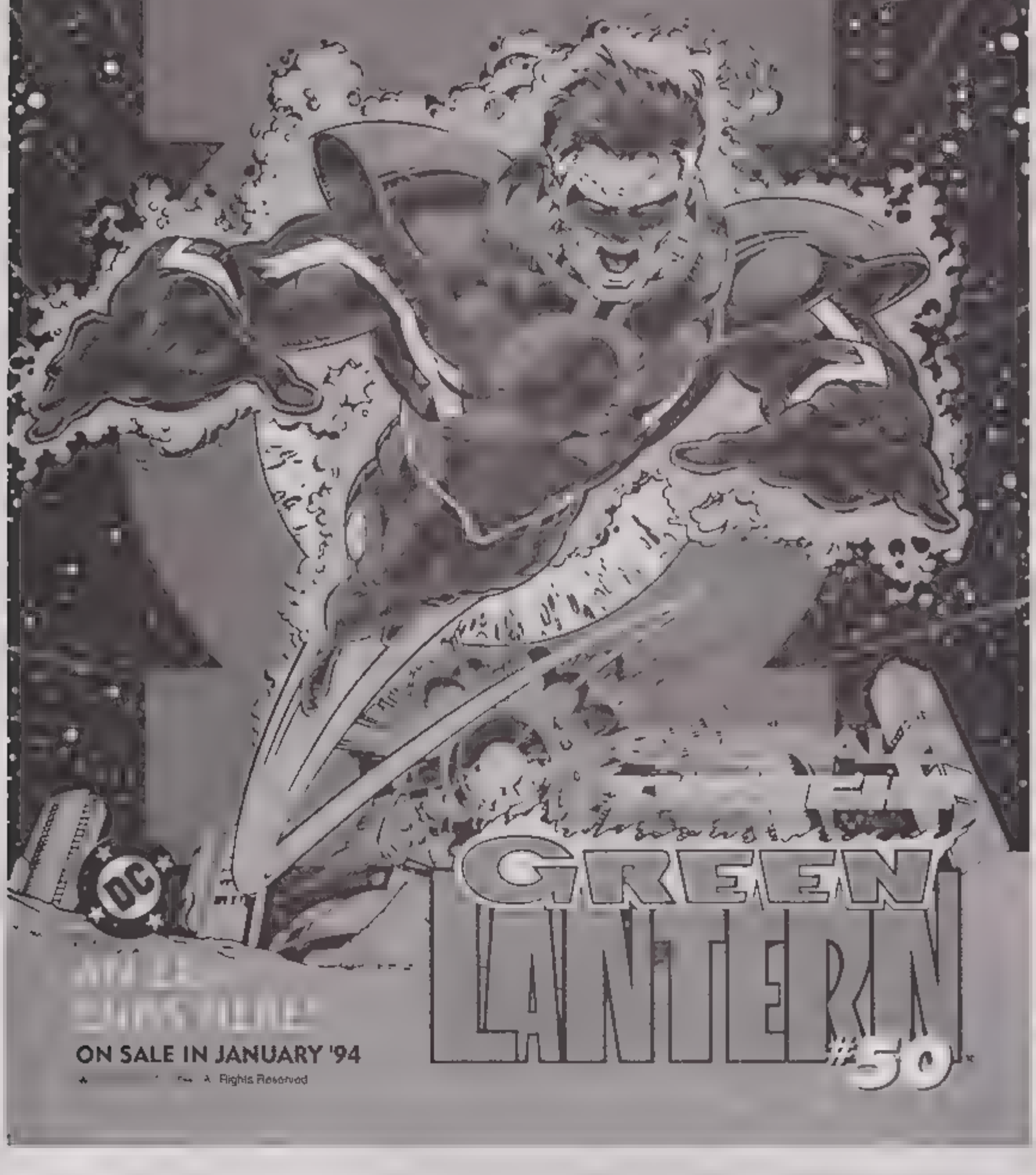

GREEN LANTERN #50

ON SALE IN JANUARY '94

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# BATMAN/SPAWN

*by Jeff Juliard*

Power. Mystery. Darkness In the world of comics today, no two characters personify these three concepts as effectively as DC's Batman and Todd McFarlane's Spawn. Bruce Wayne (Batman), the orphaned millionaire, driven by the need to avenge his parents' death at the hands of a violent street criminal, while Al Simmons (Spawn), the assassin, dies and is resurrected via a deal with the Devil, only to find that his reason for returning is forever out of reach In terms of characterization, they are nearly identical. Both are creatures of the night - the bat and the demon - cloaked in darkness. And yet, even as both characters are consumed by self-destructive forces which motivate them, they are both champions for good, striving to fight back the darkness by becoming a part of it, and turning it against itself

It is only fitting that two characters with so much in common should meet. This March they will when DC Comics releases *Batman/Spawn: War Devil*, one of two one-shots by D.C. and Image, bringing together two of the most popular names in comics.

What finally brought these two superheroes together? Denny O'Neil, editor of the Batman titles, said that all it took was a phone call.

"From my standpoint, it came about when I got a call from Todd McFarlane who suggested it. I did the sort of corporate rituals that you have to do to make sure it would be okay with everybody, and then we got it underway."

From this humble beginning sprang an event that may well be the most popular team-up in recent comics history. Spawn has been a smashing success for Todd McFarlane and Image Comics, while Batman has been riding a wave of popularity that has washed ashore movies, toys, Saturday-morning cartoons, and numerous high-profile collaborations between the comic industries biggest talents.

O'Neil, aptly summed up the Dark Knight's mystique:

"He's basically a dark character and that resonates with the way people see life. The environment's going to hell, there are two-million guns on the streets of New York at this moment, the old values have gone away and they haven't been replaced with anything. So, we're in fairly dire straits and I think people recognize that. They instinctively respond to a dark character who, however, holds out hope."

*"On the Spawn level, it had to be a demonic evil, but on the Batman level, it had to appear to have an earthly source," explained Dixon. "That way, Batman could handle the detective work and Spawn could handle the supernatural stuff."*

This popularity also means that there is a waiting list to get on Batman's dance card. Over the years, Batman has teamed up with everyone from Green Arrow to Houdini, and made numerous cameo appearances (in the original *Black Orchid* among others). In 1990, he searched for Jack The Ripper in *Gotham By Gaslight*, and in 1991, he teamed up with Judge Dredd - England's no-nonsense cop of the future - in *Judgement On Gotham*. That same year, he fought the many-mandibled Predator in a three-issue collaboration with Dark Horse Comics and met the Prince of Darkness in *Batman/Dracula Red Rain*. 1993 saw a second Batman/Judge Dredd crossover, and a long-awaited pairing with Matt Wagner's Grendel.

And what about Spawn? Spawn has become the biggest gun in Image Comics' arsenal. Drawn by Todd McFarlane and written by a cast of heavy hitters which has included Alan Moore, Frank Miller and McFarlane himself, Spawn has become a headlining act almost overnight. Who is Spawn? Spawn is an African-American assassin who makes a deal with the Devil after being killed. He wants to come back to life in order to see his wife, but the reunion backfires. When the Devil resurrects him five years later, his wife is already remarried with children, while Spawn now possesses superpowers which shorten his life every time he uses them. Not a happy situation. Who better to team Spawn up with than DC's caped crusader, Batman, who has also had his share of family problems.

This time DC's veteran super-sleuth is teaming up with a name that packs almost as much punch as his own.

Consequently, DC handed this storyline to their crack writing team of Chuck Dixon, Alan Grant, and Doug Moench - otherwise known as the "Bat-crew."

"They're my three regular Batman writers," said O'Neil. "We have a sort of happy team and there are no ego trips when we get together. Any one of them would have been the right choice to do the job, [so] there was no reason not to make it all three of them."

Writer, Chuck Dixon, approached the project a little more cautiously.

"I was dreading it," he recalled. "And then when it was over, I was sorry it was over. Doug and Alan and I have been writing together for so long, and our approaches are so similar, that it was a breeze to plot and script [the story]. I had a lot of fun with it."

With their creative team in place, O'Neil gathered the writers for a meeting, and work on the story began in earnest.

"We got together one morning and - with a little kibitzing from Scott

Peterson and myself - the three of them plotted it and then went home to write it."

According to the members of the Bat-Crew, it was not quite that simple.

"Doug really helped us get through it," laughed Dixon. "He made a study out of Spawn and could answer almost any question that we had, probably as well as Todd McFarlane could himself!"

"Basically," explained Moench, "we all read our *Spawn* and then convened for our Batman summit meeting. We talked about what we had all gotten from our reading of *Spawn* and then cooked up the plot. Since I sort of had the basic idea, I got the first sixteen pages and then Chuck picked it up from there and Alan finished it off."

The job of drawing the story was placed in the capable hands of Klaus Janson who was more than enthusiastic about taking on the task.

"This is the most ideal project that could have come my way. Not only in terms of the subject matter and artistic challenge, but also the personalities involved and the people I had to work with."

Because both Batman and Spawn function on separate but similar levels, their eventual meeting was a logical conclusion.

"A lot of what is implicit in Batman is explicit in Spawn," said O'Neil. "Batman's iconography is that of a devil. What we've done is co-opted that image and put it on the side of 'good.' I think that's one of the reasons that he's so popular after more than half a century. There is something very appealing about taking something dark and putting it on your side."

"Spawn," explained Janson, "is a very self-tortured character. He does not want to be in the situation he is in. Perhaps, given the option, Batman wouldn't want to be in the situation he's in either. I like the parallel quality of that. It's a very likely pairing, something that I wasn't sure I'd ever get to see."

Although the characters do have a lot in common, bringing them together was not as easy as one might think. There were complications which demanded careful plotting. O'Neil and his writers had to find a way to bring characters from two very different worlds together without destroying the credibility of either one.

"Because it is a Spawn story, it has a supernatural slant to it," explained O'Neil. "Although we don't allow the kind of science fiction that involves interplanetary travel in Batman, we do allow the kind of fantasy that involves limited doses of the supernatural."

Moench, found the task exhilarating. "Of the two characters, Spawn is obviously far more supernatural. This presented a bit of a problem because we've been trying to play Batman a little more straight lately.

"The problem," he continued, "was how to get Spawn involved without making the story too outlandish for the Batman milieu. Any story that presents you problems like that, that forces you to be quick on your feet and clever in devising solutions, usually ends up being a pretty good story."

The answer was *Batman/Spawn War Devil*, a story involving a dangling

BATMAN ™ & © 1994 DC Comics Spawn ™ & © 1994 Todd McFarlane

Batman ™&© 994 DC Comics Spawn ™&© 1994 Todd McFarlane

thread in Batman's career from a time before Spawn's emergence. An assassination committed in Gotham City went unsolved by the Dark Knight. Some years later, the perpetrators have returned to Gotham, and only now do we begin to discover that they are part of a much larger plan.

"On the Spawn level, it had to be a demonic evil, but on the Batman level, it had to appear to have an earthly source," explained Dixon. "That way, Batman could handle the detective work and Spawn could handle the supernatural stuff."

And how did Spawn's creator like the story? In the spirit of the collaboration, Doug Moench included Todd McFarlane in the creative process.

"Because I was the one who basically came up with the plot, and I had the first third of the book," recalled Moench, "I was elected to call Todd and run it by him. So, I gave him a real brief outline of it and he said it sounded great."

If anything was responsible for the success of this venture, it was the level of cooperation between Image and DC.

"We worked closely with Todd and with Terry Fitzgerald," recounted Denny O'Neil. "There were only two or three minor changes with regard to Spawn which you wouldn't know unless you were on the inside of the character. Overall, however, this one has gone very smoothly."

In contrast to the small army involved with the writing of *Batman/Spawn: War Devil*, the whole book will be pencilled, inked and colored by Klaus Janson.

"We have three writers and only one artist, a reversal of the usual ratio," laughed O'Neil.

Janson was more than happy to fly solo on this one. "There is no question that this was a very attractive project to be involved in. I would have worked on it in any capacity. I was very fortunate in that the offer was to pencil, ink and color it. It took me about two seconds to accept. I had been buying *Spawn* even before I got this assignment, so they didn't even have to give me a reference. I had all the issues already!"

The grim nature of the leading characters also had a certain lure for Janson. "I just seem to be drawn to that type of material. I've always been attracted to stories told in a symbolic or metaphorical way, and I think I am suited to draw those kinds of characters."

Janson also enjoyed the chance to do the job entirely on his own.

"That is one of the reasons this was such an ideal project. It was an opportunity to see a vision all the way through, from beginning to end. As an artist, that's something that, ultimately, I prefer to do. I don't have anything against collaboration, but every once in a while it's nice to do all of it."

Although Janson, O'Neil, and the entire Bat-crew are veterans of many crossover events, they all expressed the hope that *Batman/Spawn: War Devil* would be more than just a collectible.

"I'm really glad I got to be part of this," said Dixon. "We had fun writing it, and I hope everyone else will have fun when they read it."

"It's a great story," added O'Neil. "That's the main thing we sell around here these days, and we hope it will do justice to both characters. My parting words might be 'God bless the collectors, but read it for the story.'"

Artist Klaus Janson thinks that *Batman/Spawn: War Devil* will be an event that easily equals its own hype.

"I felt a kind of joy as a kid when I bought the first Spiderman/Superman team-ups," he remembered. "It was a kind of excitement that came from knowing that two comic book companies were getting together and producing one book. I would like to think that this project would generate that kind of feeling. If it could, then I would be very satisfied that we had all done our job well."

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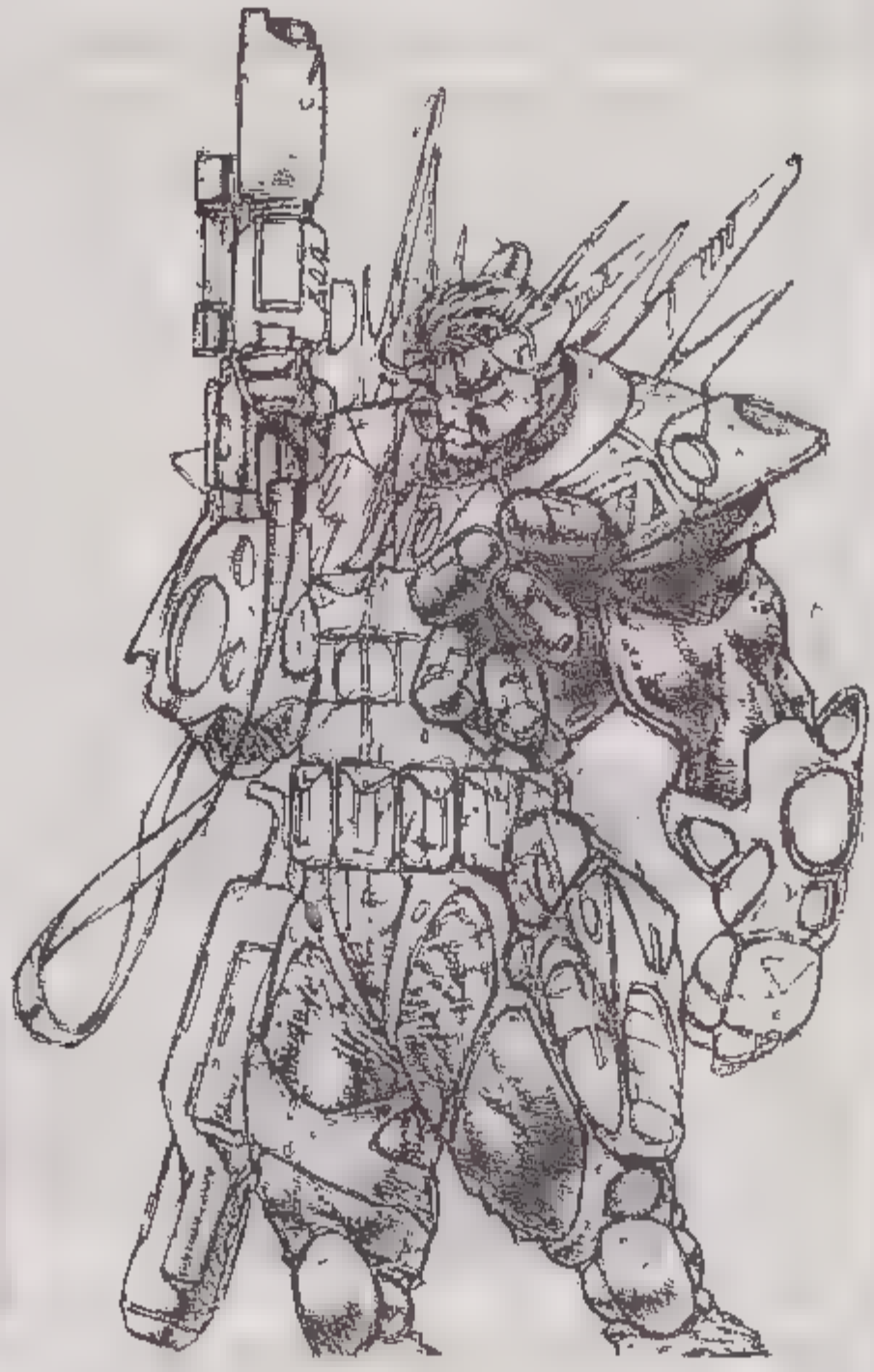

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**4. What comic book is Platt drawing for Extreme Studios?**

- **All entries must be postmarked by March 1, 1994, and the winner will be announced in *Comics Values Monthly* issue #93.**

**Congratulations to Mike McAdick of NJ, who won the illustration by John Romita Jr. and Glen Kayne of NJ who won the illustration by Scott McDaniel in the C.V.Giveaway in issue #81.**

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# CVMail

Dear Brian,

Here's something that constantly confuses me: When is one character too much like another character? And who decides? I recently read about the three main characters of *Doom's IV*. One turns into fire, one is transparent, and one is a mutated rock creature. Plus, one is even named Grimm! Sounds like the *Fantastic Four* to me!

How about Ripclaw? He not only has large claws on his hands and a bad attitude, but he also has bad visions/dreams. Sounds like Wolverine to me!

However, the one that confuses me the most is from the creators of *Supreme* who have introduced a character called "Thor, The God of Thunder" who carries a big hammer. Sounds like, well, Thor to me. Now I hear that *Pitt* is in jeopardy, because Marvel is suing Dale Keown over the similarity to *The Incredible Hulk*. Huh? Did I miss something? Let's be honest, you could take most of the current superheroes and match them up with Golden Age superheroes!

So, again, when is one character too much like another?

Kevin Kolbe
Raleigh, North Carolina

Dear Brian,

I wrote this letter to you because I don't know where else I could send my interesting information on the cover art of an independent comic book named *Team Anarchy* (from Dagger Comics). Not that I read that sort of stuff, but as I flipped through the pages of *Advance Comics* #62 I saw an ad for *Team Anarchy* #5 (page 57) and the art seemed, somehow, very familiar.

I drew it myself, at once; however, my drawing was after a Diehard drawing from Jim Lee himself, in *WildC.A.T.S* #4, page 23, upper right corner.

That so-called artist, Goler, just ripped off Diehard's head (ouch!) and changed it with I don't know which face (looks like an Image one, though!) There's still more: there's two persons running on the left of the Anarchy cover, and they look mysteriously like the characters on page 22 of *WildC.A.T.S* #4!

Maybe the whole thing is nothing new to you, but I think the man should quit his job forever if he uses such methods! Well, I think I'll stop wasting your time with such crap, and go on to something more exciting than looking at Goler's art (such as running into walls, or spelling words backwards.....). Thanks for listening.

Philipp Lenssen
Aachen, Germany

Dear Kevin and Philipp,

**This sort of stuff goes on all the time! Kevin, when you speak about *Doom's IV* borrowing from *The Fantastic Four*, never forget that Plastic Man was stretching the limits of comic credibility long before Mr. Fantastic was a gleam in Kirby and Lee's eyes. As for what is too close a resemblance? Who knows! Comic book companies have been suing each other for years over just this sort of thing.**

**As for Marvel suing Dale Keown over *Pitt* and his resemblance to the Hulk (which I hadn't heard about), isn't the Hulk more or less a straight steal from Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*? Thor is a character drawn from Norse mythology, which I guess makes him anybody's property. And Quicksilver is Flash, Aquaman is Namor, Shaft is Hawkeye is Green Arrow, there's two She-Bats and a handful of Captain Marvels, Nick Fury is Sgt. Rock, Firebirds are Camaros, Pepsi is Coke and all the Seattle bands use Black Sabbath riffs.**

**Wallace Hess Summersville, WV**

**Anybody who has a good idea always stands the chance of somebody making a knockoff copy of it. In comics, at least, they change the stuff just enough to keep it interesting. What's too close a copy? That's a question for lawyers, and the only lawyer I ever want to talk to is the one that carries the papers I have to sign to get the ten million bucks from Ed McMahon.**

**Now, Philipp, what you're talking about is called "swiping", and it's also pretty widespread in the comic industry. In some cases, this is done as a straight tribute. However, it is only a tribute when it is clearly labeled as such. An example of this would be if I swiped from Jack Kirby and then signed the work "Brian Kelly after Jack Kirby."**

**In cases where the work is not specifically signed to indicate a tribute, I guess you'd have to assume that the artist who was doing the swiping was just copying the work of a superior craftsman. However, this is a real hard call because sometimes an artist is so moved by the work of another that he may actually (consciously or unconsciously) imitate certain style points and techniques that he finds attractive in the work of another.**

**Every comic book artist I've ever interviewed has been very straightforward about admitting the major influences on their work. Some artists go as far as admitting that they slavishly imitated their comic book art heroes in the earlier stages of their careers.**

**So, in defense of Goler, it's not an uncommon practice in the industry. Besides, if he's going to swipe from someone, he might as well steal from an industry heavyweight like Jim Lee. I mean, I got absolutely nowhere imitating Mayor McCheese. People just didn't get it.**

**Mayor McBrian**

Dear Fly-Guy Bri,

I've only been collecting for a year now, so you might say I'm still an amateur. I just got the *Wizard Superman Memorial Issue* in a polybag. Without thinking, I ripped off the polybag. Did I do the wrong thing? Also I would like to know:

1) Was *Gambit* #1 a hot comic?
2) *Punisher War Journal* #61 started a crossover. Is Punisher going to be killed?
3) Did Wolverine have feelings for Jean Gray?
4) I am a real big fan of yours, and I was wondering: are you an artist?

Jigar Patel
Chicago, IL

**Dear Jigar,**

**The only mistake you made was not buying the *CVM Superman Memorial Issue*! Take every book you buy out of the bag and read it, that's what they're for. In the long run the bags are bad for the books and twenty years down the road the books you bagged and boarded**

yourself will be worth more than the books in the cheapo publisher bags. Now, on to the important questions:
1) *Gambit* #1 was a very hot book, and did very well for Marvel.
2) Well, I think it's high time Frank catches a bunch of bullets, but the bigwigs at Marvel are playing this one pretty close to the chest. Right now, Mr. Castle is in a sort of comic book limbo; he might be dead, he might not be dead. However, you can take this one to the bank: Marvel has infected Nomad with the Legacy virus, and he will most definitely shuffle off this mortal coil.
5) Logan used to have a thing for Jean Gray but every time he tried to get a little friendly, he'd get too excited and those big ol' claws would pop out and spoil the mood. Well, okay, I made that up about the claws, but he did have deep feelings for Jean. The person with the claw problem is *Triton: Comic Cards & Collectibles* Managing Editor Dean "Mackey" Sasso.
6) No, Jigar, I'm not an artist. I can, however, drink more beer than Ted Kennedy.

Stereotypical Irish Guy Bri

Dear Brian,

Is it true you're the best looking man in the comics industry?

Drew Barrymore
Hollywood, CA

Dear Drew,

Yes, it's true.

Handsome Guy Bri

Dear Brian,

Just writing to compliment Neal Hansen on his wonderful interview with Gentleman Gene Colan in *CVM* #88. Yes, a fine article on a truly superb artist, to be sure, but...wait! Can this be? No mention of Colan's magnificent work on *Doctor Strange, Master of the Mystic Arts*?

Gene's fluid, lyrical style, so appropriate for the acrobatic Daredevil, was also a perfect match for the magical dimensions of the good Doctor. Indeed, I consider my Colan-penciled issues of *Doctor Strange* to be one of the pillars of my illustrious and much-heralded comic collection (much-heralded by me, anyway).

Well, no matter. Print this letter and a grievous oversight will have been rectified.

William Spinner
Baltimore, MD

Dear William,

When you speak to somebody who's had a career as long and illustrious as Gene Colan, you've got to leave *something* out. We devoted six full pages to Gene's work in our *Comic Book Artists* guide! Gentleman Gene worked on just about everything at one point or another; I'm sorry we didn't talk about your favorites.

Coincidently, *Dr. Strange* is one of the personal favorites of *CVM* Editor Smilin' Steve Thomas, which also helps to explain why we published your letter. (Steve also gives me ten bucks everytime I mention Steve's name on the letters page, so I guess Steve owes me some dinero. Right, Steve?

Big Bucks Bri (Friend of Steve)

Yo Brian,

How come *X Factor* #6 is so underrated? It's Apocalype's first full appearance? *X-Factor* #65 rates a little better. Why?

I also want to know why, out of all the "X-Cutioner Song" crossovers only the *X-Factor*'s are worth something?

I wish Image would get its butt in gear and stop canceling all the time!

Most Outraged
Adam Lepage

CVMail Pick
From: Ron Trayling
British Columbia, Canada

Dear Adam,

Here's a real quickie primer in pricing comic books.

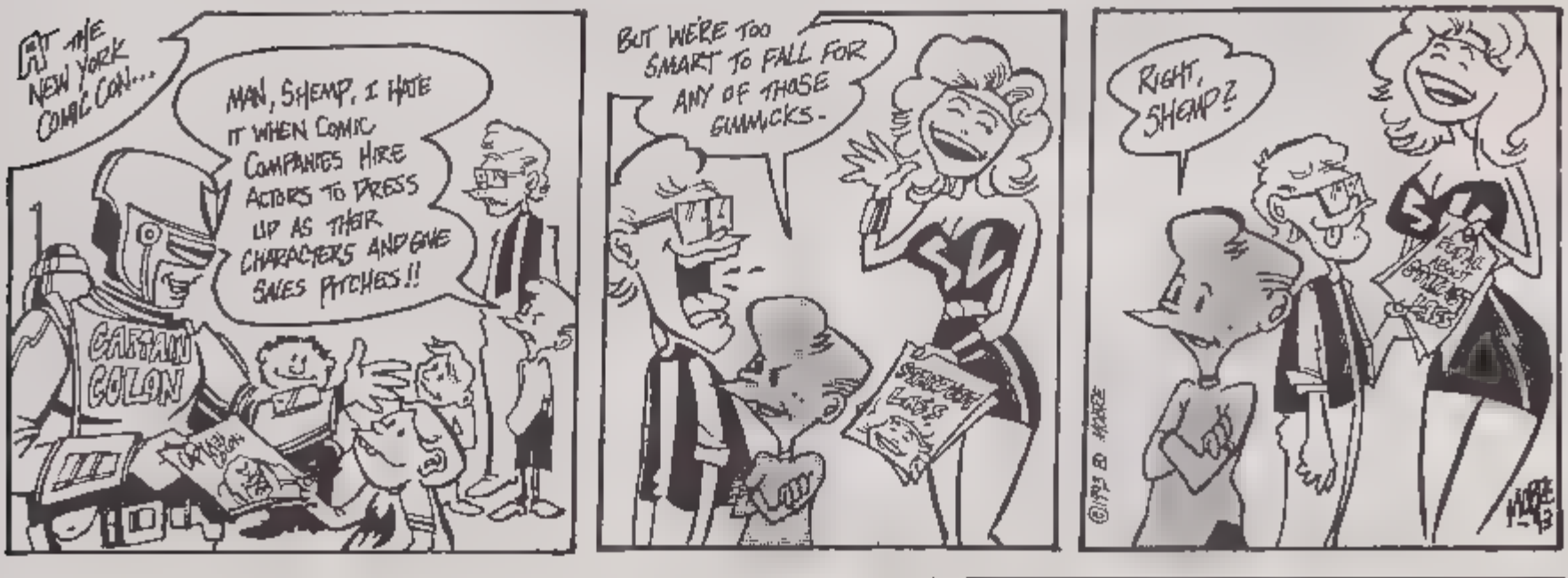
All the prices in our guide are *basically* determined by supply and demand. What determines the demand for a comic book? The major three factors are who are the characters, what happens in the books, and who the artists are.

At this point in time, the *X-Factor* books seem to be the most in demand of the X-Cutioners Song crossovers. When demand goes up, supply goes down, and values rise. I think, in the case of these books the artists involved are mainly what makes the *X-Factor* books more collectible.

As for Image getting its butt in gear? I think they are! Recent events at Image's various studios show a re-dedication to ontime production.

Prophesizin' Brian

**C.V.Funnies** **by MOBRE**


AT THE NEW YORK COMIC CON...
MAN, SHEMP, I HATE IT WHEN COMIC COMPANIES HIRE ACTORS TO DRESS UP AS THEIR CHARACTERS AND GIVE SALES PITCHES!!
CAPTAIN COLON
BUT WE'RE TOO SMART TO FALL FOR ANY OF THOSE GIMMICKS-
RIGHT, SHEMP?
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# TOP 100

**This top 100 comics list is compiled by Diamond Comics Distributors.**

| RANK | TITLE | ISSUE # |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | [illegible] | 30 |
| 2 | SPAWN | 20 |
| 3 | UNCANNY X-MEN | 310 |
| 4 | BEAVIS & BUTT-HEAD | 1 |
| 5 | X-FACTOR | 100 |
| 6 | SUPERMAN | 87 |
| 7 | WOLVERINE | 79 |
| 8 | [illegible] | 4 |
| 9 | CYBERFORCE | 3 |
| 10 | ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN | 510 |
| 11 | SUPERMAN: MAN OF STEEL | 31 |
| 12 | X-MEN UNLIMITED | 4 |
| 13 | X-MEN 2099 | 6 |
| 14 | ACTION COMICS | 697 |
| 15 | X-FORCE | 32 |
| 16 | BATMAN | 505 |
| 17 | MAXX | 7 |
| 18 | DETECTIVE COMICS | 672 |
| 19 | GREEN LANTERN | 50 |
| 20 | SHADOWMAN | 0 |
| 21 | RUNE | 1 |
| 22 | [illegible] | 387 |
| 23 | [illegible] | 2 |
| 24 | EXCALIBUR | 75 |
| 25 | STORMWATCH | 8 |
| 26 | SAVAGE DRAGON | 8 |
| 27 | CODENAME: STRYKE FORCE | 2 |
| 28 | BATMAN: SHADOW OF THE BAT | 25 |
| 29 | VENOM: THE ENEMY WITHIN | 2 |
| 30 | STEEL | 2 |
| 31 | SUPERGIRL | 2 |
| 32 | CABLE | 9 |
| 33 | SPIDER-MAN 2099 | 17 |
| 34 | SPIDER-MAN | 44 |
| 35 | TEAM YOUNGBLOOD | 5 |
| 36 | NINJAK | 3 |
| 37 | PROPHET | 5 |
| 38 | FORCE WORKS | 1 |
| 39 | X | 1 |
| 40 | SIMPSONS COMICS | 2 |
| 41 | [illegible] | 326 |
| 42 | CAPTAIN AMERICA | 425 |
| 43 | CATWOMAN | 8 |
| 44 | [illegible] | 5 |
| 45 | STAR WARS: TALES OF THE JEDI | 4 |
| 46 | FREAK FORCE | 2 |
| 47 | STORMWATCH SOURCEBOOK | |
| 48 | PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL | 54 |
| 49 | BATMAN: LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT | 58 |
| 50 | REN & STIMPY | 16 |
| 51 | VANGUARD | 4 |
| 52 | TUROK: DINOSAUR HUNTER | 10 |
| 53 | SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN | 210 |
| 54 | WEB OF SPIDER-MAN | 110 |
| 55 | INCREDIBLE HULK | 415 |
| 56 | [illegible] | 1 |
| 57 | 'BREED | 1 |
| 58 | X-O MANOWAR | 27 |
| 59 | MAGNUS: ROBOT FIGHTER/NEXUS | 2 |
| 60 | SANDMAN | 58 |
| 61 | BLOODSHOT | 15 |
| 62 | FANTASTIC FOUR | 386 |
| 63 | SPIDER-MAN: MUTANT AGENDA | 1 |
| 64 | PUNISHER | 88 |
| 65 | MARVELS | 3 |
| 66 | SILVER SURFER | 90 |
| 67 | GHOST RIDER | 47 |
| 68 | NEW WARRIORS | 45 |

X-Men ™&© 1994 Marvel Entertainment Group

| RANK | TITLE | ISSUE # |
|---|---|---|
| 69 | PUNISHER WAR ZONE | 25 |
| 70 | ALIENS/PREDATOR: DEADLIEST O/T SPECIES | 4 |
| 71 | MAGNUS: ROBOT FIGHTER | 35 |
| 72 | AVENGERS | 372 |
| 73 | BREAK-THRU | 2 |
| 74 | X-MEN ADVENTURES SEASON II | 2 |
| 75 | LEGENDS OF WORLD'S FINEST | 2 |
| 76 | PUNISHER 2099 | 14 |
| 77 | DOOM 2099 | 15 |
| 78 | WARRIORS OF PLASM | 6 |
| 79 | SOLAR, MAN OF THE ATOM | 32 |
| 80 | SECOND LIFE OF DOCTOR MIRAGE | 6 |
| 81 | LOBO | 4 |
| 82 | H.A.R.D.CORPS | 17 |
| 83 | COSMIC POWERS | 1 |
| 84 | NEW HARBINGERS | 28 |
| 85 | [illegible] | 8 |
| 86 | ETERNAL WARRIOR | 21 |
| 87 | MOON KNIGHT | 60 |
| 88 | SECRET WEAPONS | 8 |
| 89 | SIN CITY: A DAME TO KILL FOR | 3 |
| 90 | [illegible] | 24 |
| 91 | IRON MAN | 302 |
| 92 | THUNDERSTRIKE | 6 |
| 93 | SWAMP THING | 140 |
| 94 | RAI & THE FUTURE FORCE | 20 |
| 95 | WHAT IF? | 59 |
| 96 | ARCHER & ARMSTRONG | 21 |
| 97 | DARK DOMINION | 4 |
| 98 | ALIENS: MUSIC OF THE SPEARS | 1 |
| 99 | [illegible] | 7 |
| 100 | THOR | 472 |

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X-Men ™&© 1994 Marvel Entertainment Group

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| 39 | X-MEN: MANY LOVES OF JEAN & SCOTT | |
| 40 | NINJAK | 3 |
| 41 | TEAM YOUNGBLOOD | 5 |
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| 82 | EXILES | 6 |
| 83 | LOBO | 4 |
| 84 | SOLAR, MAN OF THE ATOM | 32 |
| 85 | SHADOWMAN | 24 |
| 86 | BREAK-THRU | 2 |
| 87 | THOR | 472 |
| 88 | MARVEL X-MEN COLLECTION | 3 |
| 89 | SECOND LIFE OF DOCTOR MIRAGE | 6 |
| 90 | PRIME | 8 |
| 91 | SIN CITY: A DAME TO KILL FOR | 3 |
| 92 | ARCHER & ARMSTRONG | 21 |
| 93 | H.A.R.D.CORPS | 17 |
| 94 | SHROUD | 1 |
| 95 | NEW HARBINGERS | 28 |
| 96 | ETERNAL WARRIOR | 21 |
| 97 | GHOST RIDER/BLAZE: SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE | 20 |
| 98 | WARRIORS OF PLASM | 6 |
| 99 | ALIENS: MUSIC OF THE SPEARS | 1 |
| 100 | LEGENDS OF WORLD'S FINEST | 2 |

# C.V.MOVERS

*Retailers from across the United States and Abroad, report on the state of the comic book market .*

## NORTH EAST

### Greg Bazaz
### M & M Comics and Cards
### Nyack, NY

**DC** Right now (Christmas 1993), DC has the right stuff for readers looking for the good stories. Superman titles are leading the way, including the new Superboy title. *Batman* and *Detective* have slowed down because readers are confused following the "Knightfall:Crusade" and "Knightfall.Search" stories, and trying to make some sense out of this crossover system. *Robin*, however, is gaining a strong following. Elseworld stories are also doing well with the older readers. *Green Lantern* is selling out in anticipation of issue #50 where major changes are due.

**MARVEL** X-Titles and glitzy covers lead the way for Marvel, with Spider-Man titles and *Wolverine* close behind. Daredevil sells well with *Daredevil:Man Without Fear* outselling the regular monthly. Lots of treading lightly with *Fantastic Four* and *Punisher*. The Venom mini-series has gotten old. Marvel UK and Epic are dead in the water while Razorline is doing OK. *Marvels* sold out, and the rest of the series is eagerly awaited. *Moon Knight* #55 is the most sought after current back issue, as is *X-Men* #266!

**OTHER PUBLISHERS** Image and Valiant are both struggling to maintain their readership. Image (when it ships) does well and Valiant #1's and #0's do very well. Malibu now has *Star Trek:Deep Space Nine*, it will be their best seller. Dark Horse sales have been steady with their unique stable of titles. Topps Comics just have not caught on, and Defiant is mostly ignored except for *Dark Dominion* with its Ditkoesque style.

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS** Autographed comics seem to be the "in" thing right now (Check out QVC and HSC). Everyone seems to be signing limited editions of everything. I wonder how all the artist, writers, and editors find the time to actually produce a comic book.

#### Top Ten Comics

1 Uncanny X Men
2. Spawn
3. X-Men
4 Wolverine
5. All Superman titles
6. Spider-Man titles
7 Batman titles
8. Robin
9 Ninjak
10. Ren and Stimpy

## SOUTH EAST

### Thomas Mulvey
### Jolly Rogers Comics
### Arlington, VA

**DC** At least these guys hold readers interest with mature titles. *Batman vs. Judge Dredd* and *Dark Joker: The Wild* sold very well. *Lobo* and *Man of Steel* (with Lobo) also sold well. Elseworld stories are fantastic. We will see if they hold up with the March Annuals that touch on those stories. *Batman/Spawn* shows promise, so keep your eyes open.

**MARVEL** New levels of stupidity are on the rise. The new game in town is: Lets destroy 30 years of continuity and common sense with *Captain America*, *Fantastic Four*, *Spider-Man*, and *Punisher*. At least *Daredevil* has sold very well. *Sabretooth* and *Gambit* have both flown high in sales.

**OTHER PUBLISHERS** *Spawn/Batman* is also being done by Image. Maybe we'll see it, although I doubt it. The Anima scene is not dead, but strong with a good following. Video sales help comic sales and vice versa. Valiant has taken a nose dive, and Image has dropped off considerably. *Starscream* has seen a slow, but steady, start. Ultraverse is a weak Marvel/Image.

#### Top Ten Comics

1. Marvels
2. Daredevil
3. Cross & Hatcher
4. X-Men 2099
5. Spectre
6 Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi
7. Hawkman
8. Spawn
9. Sabretooth
10. Superman titles

## NORTH CENTRAL

### Mike Laz
### Moondog's Inc.
### Elk Grove Village, IL

**DC** The new *Catwoman* is selling at a nice, steady pace. Interest is starting to build on *Green Lantern*, people are expecting big changes with the book. There has been a surprising increase in interest in the number of DC Milestone books containing the "Shadow War" crossover. Hopefully the interest will continue.

**MARVEL** The Stephen Platt *Moonknight* books are red hot, or at least the three issues that have been anyway. Too bad Marvel couldn't keep this guy on board. Interest has picked up on the *Punisher* as well as the *Avengers*. People still go for changes in characters and major plot lines. *Fantastic Four* is still selling better than in the past; is Reed dead? Will Ben heal? Everyone wants to know. The previous stagnant Midnight Sons books have really picked up with the "Siege of Darkness" crossover.

**OTHER PUBLISHERS** *Ninjak* lives up to its billing. People love it! Look out McFarlane ... here comes Stephen Platt on *Prophet*. Lots of fans waiting on this book. Is he a flash in the pan, or the next superstar? *Vanguard* is gaining the reputation of a solid Image book with good art and strong story.

#### Top Ten Comics

1 Uncanny X-Men
2. X-Men
3. Spawn
4. Wolverine
5 Daredevil
6. Superman titles
7. Ninjak
8. Punisher titles

9 Sandman
10. WildC.A.T.S.

## NORTH WEST

## Meredith Woodwell
## Zanadu Comics
## Seattle, WA

**DC** Sales on the post-"Reign of Superman" are finally slowing down. All Batman titles show strong consistent sales. News of upcoming changes to *Green Lantern* are boosting sales on issue #48. *Lobo* – Slow'bo, but the new *Aquaman* mini-series is making waves. Vertigo's "Children's Crusade" annuals are flying out of the door. *Sandman* sales fell during the previous storyline, but look out once "The Kindly Ones" begins!

**MARVEL** All X-related titles are selling extremely well, although not as well as last year. Daredevil's "Fall from Grace" and *Daredevil: Man Without Fear*, Platt's *Moon Knight* and Jae Lee's *Spider-Man* issues are guaranteed sell-outs. Was anyone able to keep *Marvels* #1 in stock for more than three days? On the other end, Marvel UK, Heavy Hitters, and Epic all sell less than many of the smallest, independent publishers.

**OTHER PUBLISHERS** Dark Horse's *Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi* and *Sin City* mini-series are stellar temptations. Ultraverse's "Rune" installments are great sellers; sales on non-"Rune" *Prime*, *Hardcase*, *Strangers*, and *Mantra* remain high, but the other titles are slowing down. Image's founding titles still sell well, but the recent spin-offs are dead in the water. Valiant titles sell half (at most) of what they did eight months ago. *Ninjak* #1's chromium cover gave it strong sales (I'll wait to see what #2 does), while *Valiant Vision* passed with flying colors. Sales on the new *Simpsons* and *Itchy & Scratchy* comics are lukewarm. Hopefully they'll pick up as word spreads among fans of the TV show. If you are not yet reading *Bone*, shame, shame, you stupid rat creatures.

### Top Ten comics

1. "Bloodties"
2. Spawn
3. Daredevil: Man Without Fear
4. Superman titles
5. WildC.A.T S.
6. Sandman
7. Ninjak
8. Gambit
9 Batman titles
10. "Children's Crusade"

## CANADA

## Jim Bain
## Wilkie's Wonderful World
## New Brunswick, Canada

**DC** The fall of 1993 has been a period of shifting loyalties and consolidation of gains made during the summer. The Superman titles certainly made the gains, as they are still outranking all but two titles in our stores. Batman, always a good seller for us, has settled down a bit higher that his titles were. We are having problems with the *New Titans*, Justice League titles, and *L.E.G.I.O.N.* and *Darkstars*.

**MARVEL** Sales on all of are Marvel titles are down. On life support: *Fantastic Four*, *Thor*, *Captain America*, and *Punisher*. Strong, but dropping, all X titles. This company can not even issue its crossovers in the right order. I would recommend a change of management. The current editors do not seem to understand the characters or the reasons behind them. Plus, the level of quality in art and story both have to be increased before readers will return. Endless spinoffs from dying books simply gives us dying spin-offs.

**OTHER PUBLISHERS** Lightning, Dagger, and Triumphant, faced with less than successful sales figures, are trying to get the consumer to believe it was on purpose. These three companies swear to never print more than a certain number of copies of each issue. Triumphant even number each copy of their book, the idea that getting a low print run equal good investment. The level of art from these companies is that of a talented amateur. Story content is way below par. However, if you do want to test a new product with potential, go after *S.T.A.T.* and *Legacy*, both from Majestic. Good stories strong plots, excellent art; all in all, a good start from a new company. With the exception of *Spawn* and *WildC.A.T.S.*, sales of Image titles are way below their earlier releases.

### Top Ten Comics

1. Spawn
2. X-Men
3. Superman
4. Adventures of Superman
5. Action Comics
6. Wolverine
7 Superman: Man of Steel
8. WildC.A.T S.
9. Uncanny X-Men
10 Detective Comics

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- Mike Clark-Showcase Comics, Bryn Mawr, PA

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- Don Bettis-Haley's Comics, Johnson City, TN
- El Curioso-Curious Georges Comics & Arcana, Birmingham, AL
- Tom Mulvey-Jolly Rogers Comics, Arlington, VA
- David Messer-Odin's Cosmic Bookshelf, Lilburn, GA

**NORTH CENTRAL U.S.**
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- Mike Laz-Moondog's, Elk Grove Village, IL
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- Jeff Hicks-Platinum Comic X-Change, Burien, WA

**SOUTH WESTERN U.S.**
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- Dennis Schamp-Comic Gallery, San Diego, CA
- Wayne Winseth-Time Warp, Boulder, CO
- Rik Offenberger-Paper Hero Comics, Chino, CA
- Gary Ramos-California Comics, Covina, CA
- Colleen O'Brien-Home Plate, Las Vegas, NV

**CANADA**
- Alan Price-LA Comics & Books, Kamloops, B.C.
- Glen Huminek-Legends of the Game, Toronto, Ontario
- Jim Bain-Wilkie's Wonderful World of Comics & Games, Moncton, New Brunswick
- Gary Gummeson-Comix Plus, Thunder Bay, Ontario

**AUSTRALIA**
- Ross McKay-Comics Etc., Brisbane, Queensland
- Barry Mellowship-Tall Tales and True, Boddina, Queensland

**FRANCE**
- Jean Wacquet, Dangereuses Visions, Lille, [illegible]

**GERMANY**
- Peter Lair-Empire Comics, Cologne

**HONG KONG**
- Michael Leung & Maggie Lau-Comic Network Hong Kong

**MANILA**
- Billy Lim-C.A.T.S. Collectibles Manila, Philippines

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Rai #9 ..$1.50 Reg. $2.25
Spawn #9....$2.00 Reg. $4.00
X-O #0..$3.00 Reg. $6.00
X-O #14..$2.50 Reg. $5.00
Deathblow #1..$1.50 Reg. $2.75
Shadowman #15..$2.00 Reg. $4.00
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- THE VERTIGO WHEEL SPINS AS CVM EXPLORES THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF THIS POPULAR IMPRINT, FEATURING NEIL GAIMAN'S LAST STORY ARC ON SANDMAN
- "WRITER'S BLOCK"
- BACK ISSUE BITS: WHAT'S HOT, NOT AND WHY!
- C.V. GIVEAWAY: WIN AN ORIGINAL ILLUSTRATION
- PLUS OUR REGULAR FEATURES:
  FUTURE PICKS
  C.V. MOVERS
  C.V. MAIL
  C.V. GALLERY
- ON SALE IN FEBRUARY

FREE GIANT 16" x 21" POSTER

THE INDUSTRY STANDARD FOR OVER SEVEN YEARS

ATTIC BOOKS LTD.

# ARTIST AND WRITERS ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| **Abel, Jack** | **JA** |
| Abell, Dusty | DAb |
| Abnett, Dan | DAn |
| Adams Art | AAd |
| Adams, Neal | NA |
| Addeo Stephen | StA |
| Adkins, Dan | DA |
| Adlard, Charlie | CAd |
| Albano, John | JAo |
| Albrecht, Jeff | JAl |
| Alcala, Alfredo | AA |
| Alcazar, Vincent | VAz |
| Allbaster, Jo | JoA |
| Amendola Sal | Sa |
| Ammeman David | DvA |
| Anderson, Bill | BAn |
| Anderson, Brent | BA |
| Anderson, Murphy | MA |
| Andriola, Alfred | AlA |
| Andru, Ross | RA |
| Aparo, Jim | JAp |
| Apthorp, Brian | BAp |
| Argones, Sergio | SA |
| Ashe Edd | EA |
| Austin, Terry | TA |
| Avison, A. | AAv |
| Ayers, Dick | DAy |
| **Badger, Mark** | **MBg** |
| Bagley Mark | MBa |
| Barbue Jim | JBa |
| Bailey Bernard | BBa |
| Baker, Kyle | KB |
| Baker, Matt | MB |
| Balent, Jim | JBa |
| Banks Carl | CB |
| Baron, Mike | MBn |
| Barr Mike | M B |
| Barreto, Ed | EB |
| Barras, John | DBs |
| Barry Dan | DBa |
| Battlefield, D. | DB |
| Beauvais, Dennis | DB |
| Bession, John | JBe |
| Belardinelli, M. | MBe |
| Bell, Bob Boze | BBB |
| Bell, George | GBl |
| Benefiel, Scott | ScB |
| Bennett, Richard | RiB |
| Berger, Charles | ChB |
| Bernstein, Robert | RbB |
| Biggs, Geoffrey | GB |
| Binder, Jack | JaB |
| Bingham, Jerry | JBi |
| Biro, Charles | CBi |
| Bisley, Simon | SBs |
| Bissette, Stephen | SBi |
| Blaisdell, Tex | TeB |
| Blasco Jesus | JBl |
| Blevins, Brent | BBl |
| Blum, Alex | AB |
| Bode Vaughn | VB |
| Bogdanove, Jon | JBg |
| Bolland, Brian | BB |
| Bolle Frank | FBe |
| Bolton, John | JBo |
| Bond, Philip | PBd |
| Booth Brett | BBh |
| Boring, Wayne | WB |
| Bossart, William | WmB |
| Boxell, Tim | TB |
| Braithwaite, Doug | DBw |
| Brasfield, Craig | CrB |
| Breeding, Brett | BBr |
| Brewster, Ann | ABr |
| Breyfogle, Norm | NBy |
| Bridwell, E.Nelson | ENB |
| Briefer Dick | DBr |
| Bright, Mark | MBr |
| Brigman June | JBr |
| Broderick, Pat | PB |
| Brodsky, Allyn | AyB |
| Broom, John | JBm |
| Broome, Matt | MtB |
| Brothers Hernandez | HB |
| Brown, Bob | BbB |
| Browne, Dick | DkB |
| Brunner, Frank | FB |
| Bryant, Rick | RkB |
| Buckler, Rich | RB |
| Budget, Greg | GBu |
| Bugni, Carl | CBu |
| Bulandi, Danny | DBi |
| Burgard, Tim | TmB |
| Burke Fred | FBk |
| Burns, John | JBn |
| Burns, Robert | RBu |
| Burroughs W | WBu |
| Buscema, John | JB |
| Buscema, Sal | SB |
| Butler, Jeff | JBt |
| Butler, Steve | SBt |
| Byrne John | JBy |
| **Calafiore, Jim** | **JCf** |
| Callahan Jim | JiC |
| Calnan John | JCa |
| Cameron, Lou | LC |
| Campbell, Stan | StC |
| Capullo, Greg | GCa |
| Cardy, Nick | NC |
| Carpenter, Brent D | BDC |
| Carter, Joe | JCt |
| Chadwick Paul | PC |
| Chan Ernie | ECh |
| Chang, Benard | BCh |
| Charest, Travis | TC |
| Chase, Bobbie | BCa |
| Chaykin, Howard | HC |
| Check, Sid | SC |
| Chen, Mike | MCh |
| Chen, Sean | SCh |
| Chestney. Lillian | LCh |
| Chichester D G | DGC |
| Chiodo Joe | JCh |
| Choi Brandon | BCi |
| Chua, Emie | Chu |
| Cirocco Frank | FC |
| Citron, Sam | SmC |
| Claremont, Chris | CCl |
| Clark Scott | ScC |
| Cockrum, Dave | DC |
| Colan, Gene | GC |
| Colby, Simon | SCy |
| Cole Jack | JCo |
| Cole, Leonard B. | LbC |
| Colletta Vince | VrC |
| Collins, Mike | MC |
| Colon, Ernie | EC |
| Conway Gerry | GyC |
| Cooper, John | JCp |
| Corben Rich | RCo |
| Costanza, Peter | PrC |
| Cowan, Denys | DCw |
| Cox, Jeromy | JCx |
| Craig, Johnny | JCr |
| Crandall. Reed | RC |
| Chriscross | Ccs |
| Crumb, Robert | RCr |
| Cruz, E.R. | ERC |
| Cruz Jerry | JCz |
| Culdera, Chuck | CCu |
| Cullins, Paris | PCu |
| Currie, Andrew | ACe |
| **Daniel, Tony** | **TnD** |
| Danner, Paul | PuD |
| David, Peter | PDd |
| Davis Alan | AD |
| Davis, Jack | JDa |
| Day, Dan | Day |
| Day Gene | GD |
| DeFalco, Tom | TDF |
| Deitch, Kim | KDe |
| DeMatteis J M | JMD |
| DeZuniga, M. | MDb |
| DeZuniga, Tony | TD |
| Diaz. Paco | PaD |
| Dillin, Dick | DD |
| Dillon, Steve | SDi |
| Ditko, Steve | SD |
| Dixon, Chuck | CDi |
| Dixon, John | JDx |
| Dobbyn, Nigel | ND |
| Dodson, Terry | TyD |
| Doherty, Peter | PD |
| Dominguez, Luis | LDz |
| Doran Colleen | CDo |
| Dorey, Mike | MDo |
| Dorman, Dave | DvD |
| Drake, Stan | SDr |
| Dresser, Larry | LDr |
| Drucker, Mort | MD |
| Duffy Jo | JDy |
| Dumm Gary | GDu |
| Duursema, Jan | JD |
| Dwyer, Kieron | KD |
| **Edlund, Ben** | **BEd** |
| Eisner Will | WE |
| Elder Bill | BE |
| Elias, Lee | LE |
| Elliot, D. | DE |
| Ellison, Harlan | HaE |
| Emberlin, Randy | RyE |
| Englehart Steve | SEI |
| Ennis, Garth | GEn |
| Epting, Steve | SEp |
| Erskine Gary | GEr |
| Esposito, Mike | ME |
| Estrada, Ric | RE |
| Evans, George | GE |
| Everett, Bill | BEv |
| Ewins Brett | BEw |
| Ezquerra, Carlos | CE |
| **Fabry, Glen** | **GF** |
| Fago. A. | AFa |
| Farmer Mark | MFm |
| Fegredo, Duncan | DFg |
| Feldstein, Al | AF |
| Fine, Lou | LF |
| Fingeroth, Danny | DFr |
| Finnocchiaro, Sal | SF |
| Fleisher Michael | MFl |
| Flemming, Homer | HFl |
| Foreman, Dick | DiF |
| Forte, John | JF |
| Forton, Gerald | GFo |
| Fox, Gardner | GaF |
| Fox, Gill | GFx |
| Fox, Matt | MF |
| Franchesco | Fso |
| Frank, Gary | GFr |
| Frazetta Frank | FF |
| Freeman, John | JFr |
| Freeman. Simon | SFr |
| Franz, Ron | RF |
| Friedrich Mike | MkF |
| Frolechlich, A. | AgF |
| Fujitani Fujei Bob | BF |
| Furman, Simon | SFu |
| **Gaiman, Neil** | **NGa** |
| Gammill, Kerry | KGa |
| Garcia, Dave | DaG |
| Garney Ron | RG |
| Garzon, Carlos | CG |
| Gascoine Phil | PGa |
| Gaughan, Jack | JGa |
| Geggan | Ggn |
| Gerber Steve | SvG |
| Giacoia, Frank | FrG |
| Giarrano Vince | VGi |
| Gibbons, Dave | DGb |
| Gibson, Ian | IG |
| Giella Joe | JoG |
| Giffen, Keith | KG |
| Giordano, Dick | DG |
| Glansman, Sam | SG |
| Gonzalez, Jorge | JGz |
| Goodman, Till | TGo |
| Goodwin Archie | AGw |
| Golden, Michael | MGo |
| Gordan, Al | AG |
| Gottfredson, Floyd | FG |
| Gould, Chester | ChG |
| Grent, Alan | AlG |
| Grant, Steve | StG |
| Green Dan | DGr |
| Greene, Sid | SGs |
| Grell, Mike | MGr |
| Griffith, Bill | BG |
| Griffiths, Martin | MGs |
| Grindberger Tom | TGb |
| Grossman, R | RGs |
| Gruenwald, Mark | MGu |
| Grummett, Tom | TG |
| Guardineer Frank | FG |
| Guice, Jackson | JG |
| Guichet, Yvel | YG |
| Gulacy, Paul | PG |
| Gustovich, Mike | MG |
| **Ha, Gene** | **GeH** |
| Hall. Bob | BH |
| Halsted, Ted | TeH |
| Hama, Larry | LHa |
| Hamilton, Tim | TH |
| Hammer Cully | CHm |
| Hampton, Bo | BHa |
| Hannigan, Ed | EH |
| Hanna, Scott | SHa |
| Harras, Bob | BHa |
| Harrison, Simon | SHn |
| Hart, Ernest | EhH |
| Haynes Hugh | HH |
| Hazlewood, Douglas | DHz |
| Heath, Russ | RH |
| Hebbard, Robert | RtH |
| Heck, Don | DH |
| Henry, Flint | FH |
| Herman, Jack | JH |
| Herrera,Ben | BHr |
| Hewlett, Jamie | JHw |
| Hibbard, E.E. | EHi |
| Hickleman John | JHk |
| Higgins, John | JHi |
| Hitch, Brian | BHi |
| Hoberg, Rick | RHo |
| Hogarth, Burne | BHg |
| Hopgood, Kevin | KHd |
| Hoover, Dave | DHv |
| Horie, Richard | RHe |
| Howell, Rich | RHo |
| Hughes, Adam | AH |
| Hudnall James | JH |
| Hund, Dave | DeH |
| Hunt, Chad | CH |
| **Immonen, Stuart** | **SI** |
| Infantino, Carmine | CI |
| Ingles, Graham | Grl |
| Ioño, Medio | MI |
| Isherwood, Geoff | GI |
| Ivie Larry | LI |
| Ivy Chris | CIv |
| **Janke, Dennis** | **DJa** |
| Janson, Klaus | KJ |
| Jenney, Robert | RJ |
| Jensen, Dennis | DJ |
| Jimminiz, Phil | PJ |
| Johnson, Dave | DvJ |
| Johnson, Todd | TJn |
| Jones, Casey | CJ |
| Jones. Jeff | JJ |
| Jones, Gerard | GJ |
| Jones, Kelley | KJo |
| Jones, Malcom | MJ |
| Jones. R A | RAJ |
| Jurgens, Dan | DJu |
| Jusko. Joe | JJu |
| **Kaluta, Mike** | **MK** |
| Kaman, Jack | JKa |
| Kaminski, Len | LKa |
| Kane & Romita | K&R |
| Kane, Bob | BKa |
| Kane, Gil | GK |
| Kanigher Bob | BbK |
| Karounos, Paris T | PaK |
| Katz, Jack | JKz |
| Kavanagh, Terry | TKa |
| Kelly, Walt | WK |
| Kennedy, Cam | CK |
| Keown, Dale | DK |
| Kesel, Babara | BKs |
| Kesel, Karl | KK |
| Kieth, Sam | SK |
| King, Hannibal | HbK |
| Kinsler, Everett R. | EK |
| Kirby, Jack | JK |
| Kisniro, Yukito | YuK |
| Kitson, Barry | BK |
| Kobasic, Kevin | KoK |
| Kollins, Scott | ScK |
| Krenkel, Roy | RKr |
| Krigstein, Bernie | BK |
| Kubert, Adam | AKu |
| Kubert, Andy | NKu |
| Kubert, Joe | JKu |
| Kurtzman. Harvey | HK |
| **Lanning, Andy** | **ALa** |
| Lapham Dave | DL |
| Larkin,Bob | BLr |
| LaRocque, Greg | Grl |
| Larroca, Salvador | SvL |
| Larsen, Erik | EL |
| Lashley. Ken | KeL |
| Lavery, Jim | JLv |
| Layton, Bob | BL |
| Leach, Garry | GL |
| Lee. Jae | JaL |
| Lee. Jim | JiL |
| Lee, Stan | StL |
| Leeke, Mike | MLe |
| Lelaloha, Steve | SL |
| Leonardi Rick | RL |
| Levins, Rik | RLe |
| Lieber Larry | LrL |
| Lieiod Rob | RLd |
| Lightle, Steve | SLi |
| Lim Ron | RLm |
| Livingstone, R. | RLv |
| Lobdell, Scott | ScL |
| Lopez,Jose | JL |
| Lopresti. Aaron | AaL |
| Lowe John | Low |
| Lubbers, Bob | BLb |
| Luzniak, Greg | GLz |
| Lyle, Tom | TL |
| **Macchio, Ralph** | **RMc** |
| Mackie, Howard | HMa |
| Madueira, Joe | JMd |
| Maggin, Elliot S. | ESM |
| Maguire, Kevin | KM |
| Magyar Rick | RM |
| Mahlstedt, Larry | LMa |
| Mahnke, Doug | DoM |
| Mandrake Tom | TMd |
| Maneely, Joe | JMn |

# ARTIST AND WRITERS ABBREVIATIONS

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Manley, Mike | MM | Phillips, Joe | JoP | Stern, Roger | RSt | Art & Script | (a&s) |
| Mann, Roland | Man | Pini, Wendy | WP | Stevens, Dave | DSt | Back-Up Story | BU |
| Manning, Russ | RsM | Platt, Stephen | SPa | Story, Karl | KiS | Beginning of | B |
| Marais, Raymond | RaM | Ploog, Mike | MP | Stradley Randy | RSd | Birth | b |
| Maroto Esteban | EM | Pollard, Keith | KP | Strazewski, Len | LeS | Cameo by | C |
| Marrinan, Chris | CrM | Polling, Adam | AdP | Stroman, Larry | LSn | Cover | c) |
| Martin, Gary | GyM | Porch, David | DPo | Sullivan, Lee | LS | Crossover with | x-over |
| Marz, Ron | RMz | Portacio, Wilce | WPo | Sutton, Tom | TS | Death of | D |
| Mason, Tom | TMs | Potts, Carl | CP | Swan, Curt | CS | Ending of | E |
| Matsuda, Jeff | Ms | Powell Bob | BP | Takezaki, Tony | ToT | Features | F |
| Mayer, Sheldon | ShM | Power, Dermot | DPw | Talbot, Bryan | BT | Golden Age | G A |
| Mayerik, Val | VMk | Prosser Jerry | JeP | Tallarico, Tony | TyT | Graphic Novel | GN |
| Mazzucchelli, David | DM | **Quesada, Joe** | JQ | Tanghal, Romeo | RT | Hardcover | HC |
| McCarthy, Brendon | BMy | Quinones, Peter | PQ | Taylor, David | DTy | Inks by | i) |
| McDaniel, Scott | SMc | Quinn, David | DQ | Tenney Mark | MaT | Introduction of | I |
| McDaniel Walter | WMc | **Raboy, Mac** | MRa | Texiera, Mark | MT | Joining of | J |
| McDonnell Luke | LMc | Ramos, Rodney | RyR | Thilbert, Art | AT | Leaving of | L |
| McFarlane, Todd | TM | Randall, Ron | RnR | Thomas, Dann | DTs | New Costume | N |
| McGregor, Don | DMG | Raney, Tom | TR | Thomas, Roy | RTs | No Issue Number | N# |
| McKean, Dave | DMc | Rankin Rich | RRa | Thomason, Derek | DeT | Origin of | O |
| McKone, Mike | MMK | Raymund, Norm | NRy | Thorne, Frank | FT | Painted Cover | P(c) |
| McLaughlin, Frank | FMc | Raymond, Alex | AR | Torres, Angelo | AT | Part | pt |
| McLeod Bob | BMc | Redondo, Nestor | NR | Toth, Alex | ATh | Pencils by | (p) |
| McMahon, M | MMc | Reed, David | DvR | Tottleben, John | JTo | Photographic cover | Ph(c) |
| McManus, Shawn | SwM | Reinhold, Bill | BR | Trimpe, Herb | HT | Plotter | (pl) |
| McWilliams, Al | AMc | Richards, Ted | TR | Truog, Chas | ChT | Prestige Format | PF |
| Medina Angel | AMe | Richardson, Mike | MRi | Truman, Timothy | TT | Preview | Prev |
| Meskin, Mort | MMe | Rico Don | DnR | Turner, Dwayne | DT | Reprinted Issue | rep |
| Messner-Loebs, Bill | BML | Ridgeway, John | JRy | Tuska George | GT | Retold | rtd |
| Micheline, David | DvM | Riley, John | JnR | **Ulm, Chris** | CU | Return/Revival of | R |
| Mignola, Mike | MM | Ripley | Rip | **Vachess, Andrew** | AVa | Silver Age | S A |
| Miki, Danny | DnM | Robinson,James | JeR | Valentino, Jim | JV | Script & Inks | (s&i) |
| Milgrom, Al | AM | Robbins, Frank | FR | Vallejo, Boris | BV | Softcover | SC |
| Miller Frank | FM | Rodier Denis | DRn | Vanhook, Kevin | KVH | Team Up | T U |
| Miller, Steve | SM | Rogers, Marshall | MR | Vargas, Vagner | VV | Trade Paperback | TPB |
| Milligan, Peter | PtM | Romita, John | JoR | Veitch, Rick | RV | Versus | V |
| Mitchel, Barry | BM | Romita, John Jr | JR2 | Velez, Ivan, Jr | IV | Wedding of | W |
| Moebius | Moe | Rosenberger,J | JRo | Veluto, Sal | SaV | Written By | (s) |
| Moench, Doug | DgM | Roth, Werner | WR | Vey, Al | AV | | |
| Montano, Steve | SeM | Royle, Jim | JR | Vigil Tim | TV | | |
| Mooney Jim | M | Royle, John | JRe | Vokes, Neil | NV | | |
| Moore, Alan | AM | Rubinstein, Joe | JRu | Von Eeden, Trevor | TVE | | |
| Moore, Jerome | JeM | Rude, Steve | SR | Vosburg, Mike | MV | | |
| Moore, John Francis | JFM | Ruffner, Sean | SRf | **Wagner, Matt** | MWg | | |
| Morgan, Tom | TMn | Russell, P Craig | CR | Wagner Ron | RnW | | |
| Moretti, Mark | MMo | Ryan, Matt | MRy | Ward, Bill | BWa | | |
| Morisi, Pete | PAM | Ryan, Paul | PR | Warner, Chris | CW | | |
| Morosco, Vincent | VMn | **St.Pierre, Joe** | JSP | Washington II Robert E. | 3RW | | |
| Morrison, Grant | GMn | Saka, Stan | SS | Weeks Lee | LW | | |
| Mooney Gary | GM | Salmons Tony | TSa | Wein, Len | LWn | | |
| Murphy Wm | WMo | Saltares, Javier | JS | Welch, Larry | LyW | | |
| Murray Brian | BrM | Saviuk, Alex | AS | Wendel Andrew | AdW | | |
| Musial, Joe | JoM | Schaffenberger, Kurt | KS | Wesl Kevin | KWe | | |
| Muth, Jon J. | JM | Scott, Jeffery | JSc | Weston, Chris | CWn | | |
| Mychaels, Marat | MMy | Scott, Trevor | TrS | Whitney, Ogden | OW | | |
| **Naifeh, Ted** | TNa | Sears, Bart | BS | Wiacek, Bob | BWi | | |
| Neary Paul | PNe | Sekowsky, Mike | MSy | Wildey, Doug | DW | | |
| Nebres, Rudy | RN | Semeiks, Val | VS | Wildman, Andrew | Wld | | |
| Nelson | Nel | Senior, Geoff | GSr | Williams, Anthony | AWi | | |
| Netzer, Mike | MN | Serpe, Jerry | JrS | Williams, David | DdW | | |
| Newton, Don | DN | Severin, John | JSe | Williams, Kent | KW | | |
| Nguyen, Hoang | HNg | Shamray Gerry | GSh | Williams, Scott | SW | | |
| Nichols, Art | AN | Sharp, Liam | LSh | Williamson Al | AW | | |
| Nicieza, Fabian | FaN | Sherman, Jim | JSh | Williamson, Skip | SWi | | |
| Nino, Alex | AN | Shoemaker Terry | TSr | Willingham, Bill | BWg | | |
| Nolan, Graham | GN | Shooter, Jim | JrS | Wills Damon | DaW | | |
| Norem, Earl | EN | Shuster, Joe | JoS | Wilshire, Mary | MW | | |
| Nostrand, Howard | HN | Siegel & Shuster | S&S | Wilson, Colin | CW | | |
| Novick, Irv | IN | Sienkiewicz, Bill | BSz | Wilson, Gahan | GW | | |
| Nowlan, Kevin | KN | Silvestri, Eric | ErS | Wilson, Keith S | KSW | | |
| **Olbrich, Dave** | DO | Silvestri, Mark | MS | Woggin, Bill | BWo | | |
| Oliffe, Patrick | PO | Sim, Dave | DS | Wojtkiewicz, Chuck | Woj | | |
| O'Neil, Denny | DON | Simon & Kirby | S&K | Wolf, Chance | CWl | | |
| O Neill Kevin | KON | Simon, Joe | JSm | Wolfman, Marv | MWo | | |
| Ordway, Jerry | JOy | Simonson, Louise | LSi | Wolverton, Basil | BW | | |
| Orlando, Joe | JO | Simonson, Walt | WS | Wood, Bob | BoW | | |
| Ortiz, Jose | JOt | Simpson, Howard | HSn | Wood, Wally | WW | | |
| Oskner Bob | BO | Simpson, Will | WSm | Wrightson Berni | BWr | | |
| Ostrander, John | JOs | Sinnott, Joe | JSt | Wyman M C | MCW | | |
| **Pacol a Mark** | MPa | Smith,Barry W | BWS | **Yaep Chap** | CYp | | |
| Pappas Rudy | RP | Smith, Cam | CaS | Yeates, Tom | TY | | |
| Palmer, Tom | TP | Smith, Malcom | MSt | Yeowell, Steve | SY | | |
| Palmiotti, Jimmy | JP | Smith, Paul | PS | **Zachary, Dean** | DZ | | |
| Panaligan, Noly | NP | Smith, Robin | RSm | Zaffino, Jorge | JZ | | |
| Panosian, Dan | DPs | Smith, Ron | RS | Zeck, Mike | MZ | | |
| Parkhouse, Annie | APh | Spark | Spk | | | | |
| Parkhouse, Steve | SvP | Sparling, Jack | JkS | | | | |
| Pascoe James | JmP | Speigle Dan | DSp | | | | |
| Pearson, Jason | JPn | Spiegelman, Art | ASp | | | | |
| Pelletier, Paul | PaP | Springer, Frank | FS | | | | |
| Pennington, Mark | MPn | Starlin, Jim | JSn | | | | |
| Pensa, Shea Anton | SAP | Starr, Leonard | LSt | | | | |
| Perez. George | GP | Staton Joe | JSon | | | | |
| Perham, James | JPh | Steacy, Ken | KSy | | | | |
| Perlin, Don | DP | Stelfreeze, Brian | BSf | | | | |
| Perryman, Edmund | EP | Steranko, Jim | JSo | | | | |
| Peterson, Brandon | BPe | Stephenson, Eric | ErS | | | | |

## GENERAL

| | |
|---|---|
| Value Has Risen | + |
| Value Has Decreased | - |
| New Listing | * |
| Adaptation | Adapt |
| Anniversary | Anniv |
| Annual | Ann # |
| Appearance of | A |
| Artist | (a) |


PLEASE NOTE
IN ADDITION TO
PENCILLERS AND
INKERS, CVM IS
NOW ADDING
WRITERS AND
PLOTTERS TO ITS
ALREADY
EXTENSIVE
LISTING

ANY ADDITIONS
OF ARTISTS AND
WRITERS OR
CORRECTIONS TO
THE COMIC
LISTINGS THAT
YOU MIGHT WISH
TO SEND WILL BE
GREATLY
APPRECIATED

THE PERSON WHO
SENDS THE MOST
CORRECTIONS
WILL PLACED ON
THE CVM "SPEC
THANKS" LIST
AND RECEIVE A
COPY OF COMICS
BOOK ARTISTS

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[illegible]

## ACTION

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246 WB,A:Krypton Island .... 85.00
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:Superboy
:Supergirls
World
265 A:Hyper-Man ..... 45.00
267 JM,3rd A:Legion of Super-Heroes,I:Invisible Kid 285.00
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Super
Becomes
Batman
281 JM,A:Krypto
Legion of Super
Heroes
Steel .... 13.00
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Skyscraper Superman 13.00
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,Hercules . 13.00
Steel .... 13.00
13.00
13.00
Skyscraper Superman 13.00
Legion of Super

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331 CS,V:Dr.Supernatural 13.00
333 A:Lex Luthor ..... 13.00
334 A:L.Luthor,(giant) .... 15.00
335 CSV:Lex Luthor .... 10.00

337 CS,V:Tiger Gang
338 CS,JM,V:Muto
341 CS,V:Vakox,A:Batman .... 9.00
9.00
(100 page giant) .... 4.00
A:Atom
525 JSon,FMc,AS,I:Neutron, A:Air Wave
2.00
Satanis
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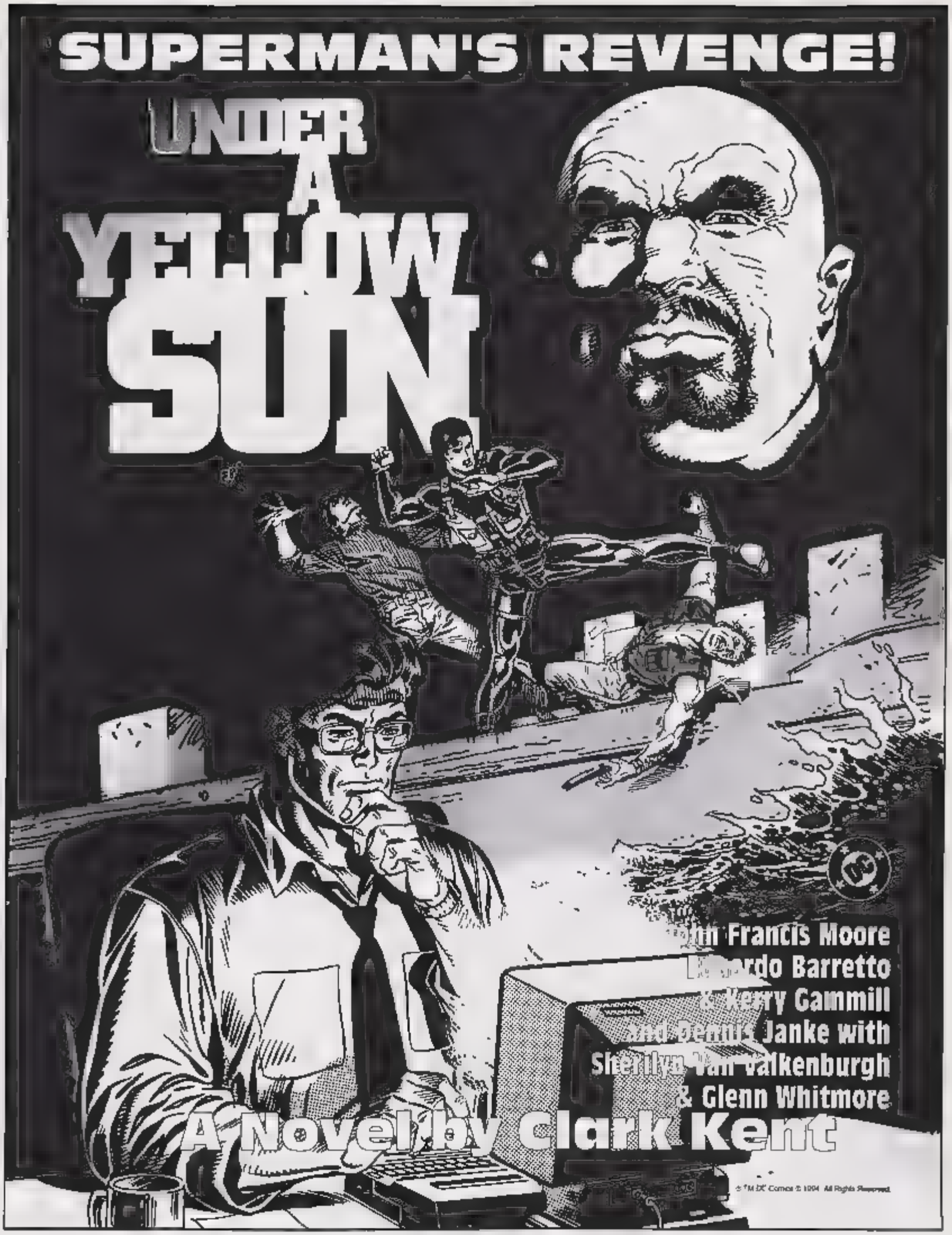

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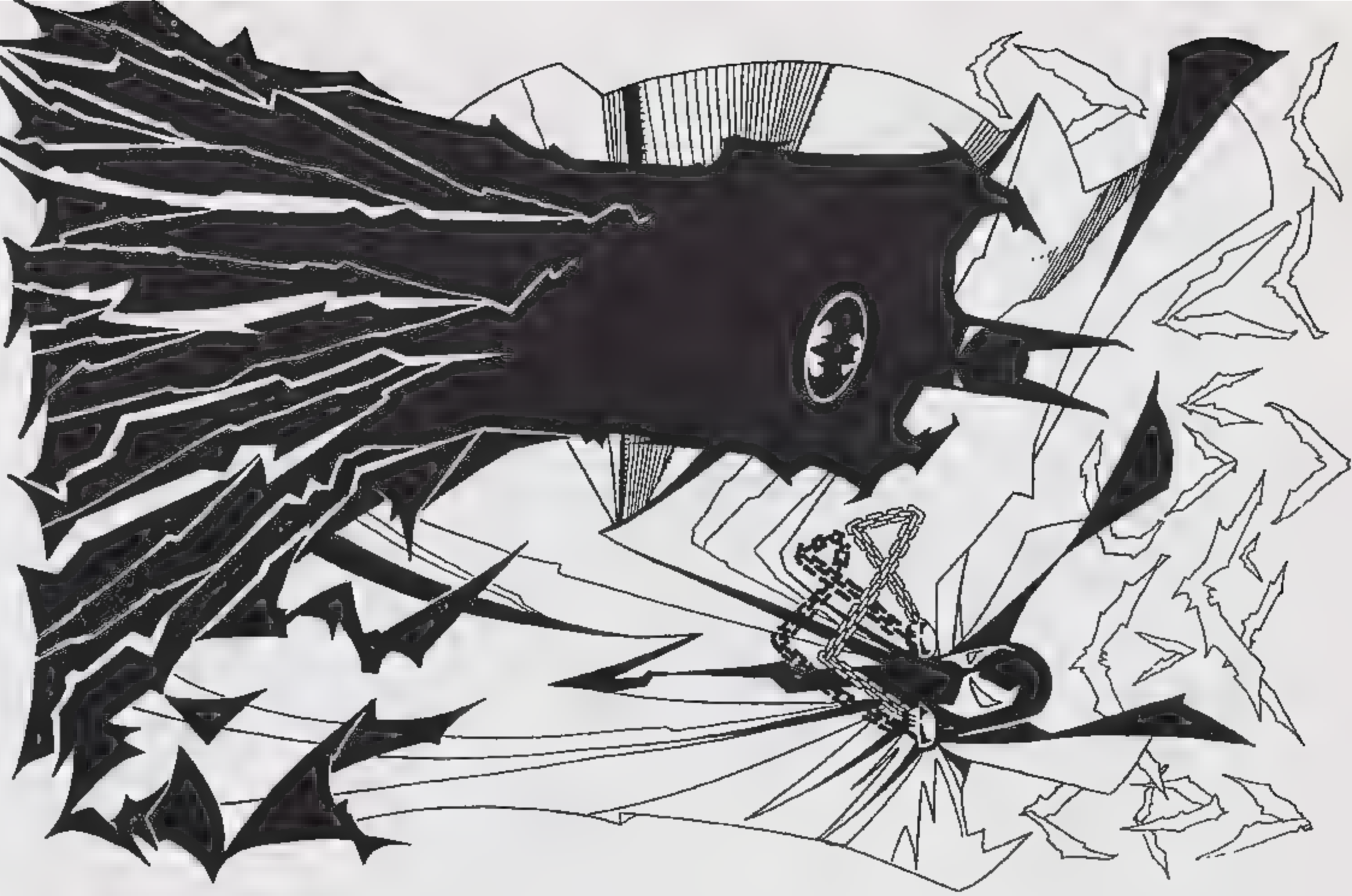

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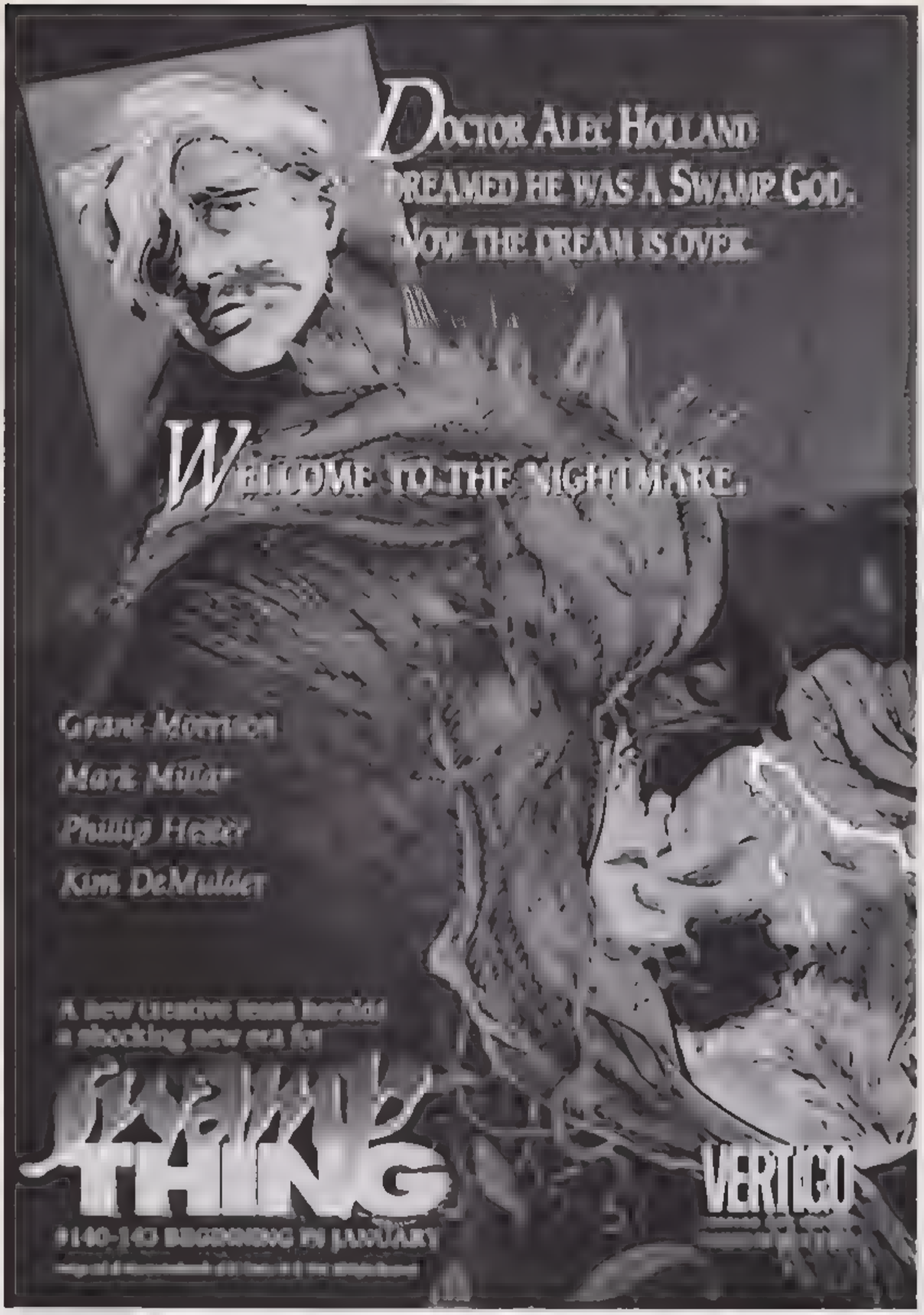
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4 RTs(s),HT V:Mole Man,A:Hulk 4.25

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TPB Rep #1-4 12.95

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4 thru 8 JK,Capt.America rep. 12.00
7 SD,Sub Mariner rep
8 H.Torch & Sub M.rep,
9 SD,MF,O:Human Torch Rep
10
1 J

### Volume 2

1 thru 7 JB,JSt,Silver Surfer rep 6.00
8 JB,JSn,Warlock rep.Strange Tales #178 5.00
9 JB,JSn,rep.StrangeTales#179 5.00
10 JB,JSn,rep.StrangeTales#180 5.00
11 JB,JSn,rep,StrangeTales#181 5.00
12 JB,JSn,rep.Warlock #9 5.00
13 JB,JSn,rep.Warlock #10
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## FEUD
Epic

## FIGHT MAN

Fight Man

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4

## GAMBIT

1 HMe(c),...ft,Au,Embossed(c), LeBeau,V:Assassin's Guild
2 LW,KJ,C:Gideon,A:Rogue
3 LW,KJ,A:Candra,Rogue, D:Gambit's Father 2.00+

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2 I:Taktos
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20 GK,KJ,JBy,A:Daredevil 25.00
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9.00
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28 DP,A:The Orb 9.00
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33 DP,:Dark Riders 7.00
34 DP C:Cyclops 7.00
36 DP Drug Mention 7.00
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38
40
41
42 ,A:Wacko
43 C:Crimson
45 DP,I:Flagg Fargo
46 DP,A:Flagg Fargo
47 AM,DP

#1 A:Arabian Knight

71 DP I:... Henderson
72 A:Circus of Crime
73 A:Circus of Crime
74 A:Centurions
75 I:Steel Wind
76 DP,A:Mephisto,I:Saturnine
77 O:Ghost Rider's Dream
78 A:Nightmare
79 A:Man Cycler
80 A:Centurions
81 D:Ghost Rider

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avage Land Mutates 4.50

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290 WPr,ATi Freaks progress

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306 JR2,V:Hodge .50
307 JR2,Bloodlies#4 A:Avengers

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[2nd Regular Series]

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## X-MEN/ ANIMATION SPECIAL

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Nightcrawler

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34 .50
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36 Becomes X-MEN CLASSIC

## X-MEN CLASSIC

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## X-MEN DAYS OF FUTURE PRESENT

## X-MEN SPOTLIGHT ON STARJAMMERS

## X-MEN 2099

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## X-MEN UNLIMITED

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# Conventional Wisdom

**Luckily for the hundreds of comic fans attending the Great Eastern Convention, the long line is for tickets and not the restroom.**

Photo courtesy of Great Eastern Conventions

*by Gwenn Mercadoocasio*

In thirty years, Comic Book Conventions have grown from intimate gatherings in the local Legion Hall, to massive expositions held in state-of-the-art convention centers around the country.

Enthusiastic collectors have become entrepreneurs, fandom has become an industry unto itself, and show organizers work year round to put a three to four day convention together.

The first Comics Conventions were outgrowths of the Science Fiction Conventions which had existed since the 1930s.

Until the early 1960s, the Science Fiction Convention seems to have been the marketplace for popular culture, as well as the meeting place for fans wishing to celebrate a shared interest. It would not have been unusual to attend a pre-1960s Sci Fi Con and find *Amazing Stories* and *Weird Tales* being sold alongside *Sensation Comics*.

In 1964, comic book collectors broke the connection to Science Fiction when they found their own forum. According to an article which appeared in Larry Ivie's, *Monsters & Heroes* magazine, 1964 saw the first *World ComicCon*.

Created by Bernie Bubnis, *ComicCon* lasted half a day and took place in a rented room in New York City It was a huge success. A year later the second *ComicCon* run by Dave Kaler, expanded to two days and filled two rented rooms in New York City

The big apple was again the venue for the third *Comicon* in 1966. Run by a committee headed by John Benson, it also spanned two days, but by this time required three large rooms. This convention was quickly followed by Dave Kaler's first *AcademyCon* in New York.

Bob Weinberger, one of the four partners responsible for the annual *Chicago ComicCon*, remembers attending the early comics shows. He sometimes shared a dealer's table with friends, since none of them had enough comics material to cover a table by themselves. He recalled the shows as being very exciting events.

"There was a lot of television coverage at the time. So much publicity' Crowds were arriving with armloads of comics from their attics, trying to sell them because they'd heard through the television coverage that they were valuable."

Laughing, he admitted that he and a friend took to waiting by the elevators, so they'd have first shot at the hopeful sellers as they arrived.

By 1967, television publicity assured larger attendance, and the first *Association-Con*, run by Calvin Beck and Dave Kaler's second *AcademyCon*, benefited greatly as a result.

That same year, a comics fan named Phil Seuling attended the *World Sci-Fi Con* in Ohio and decided to model future comics shows on a similar format.

July 1968 saw the first S.C.A.R.P.-Con, another committee-run show headed by Phil Seuling. *S.C.A.R.P.Con* took place over four days on the top floor of the Statler Hilton in New York City

Fred Greenberg, the man behind the *Great Eastern Comics Conventions*, remembers walking into that first *S.C.A.R.P.-Con* and being totally overwhelmed.

"I walked in and saw Murphy Anderson first off! I was too shy to talk to him. I revered everyone in comics, and comics themselves, so much . . I just wanted to see all these people, and the comics, in person."

By 1970, the *S.C.A.R.P.-Con* had become *Phil Seuling's Comic Art Convention*, an event that took place annually for the next 15 years.

In 1971, partners Adam Malin and Gary Berman mounted the first of their *Creation* conventions, which they ran successfully through 1978 as comics shows. After 1978 however, *Creation* became more multi-media oriented until 1985, when they made the decision to change from comics to Science Fiction (particularly Star Trek) shows completely. According to Creation Entertainments public relations person, Tim Young, the decision was a financial one. They felt that the Sci-Fi market was more constant than comics.

About the same time, the first of the annual *San Diego Comic-Cons* was being put together. By 1976 it would become a non-profit organization run by a board of directors and chaired by David Scroggy

Fae Desmond, General Manager for the *San Diego Comic-Con*, remembers being dragged against her will to the show by her husband.
"The next day," she said, "I went back by myself and volunteered. I've been working on the show ever since."

In 1975, three comic book retailers, Larry Charet, Joe Sharno, and Ross Kite - fans themselves - formed a partnership to run the first *Chicago ComicCon*. Over the years the partners have changed, as has the annual show. It is currently run by founder Larry Charet and his partners Bob Weinberger, Nancy Ford and Gary Colabuono.

In 1977, Fred Greenberg ran his first comics convention, pretty much by accident.

"I was at a small Sci Fi show, and I'd made fifty dollars selling comics there. I wanted to get a table for the next show, but the guys running it had already left. I went to the hotel desk for information only to find no "next" show scheduled. I asked if I could schedule a show and was told I could. The cost happened to be fifty dollars! I stepped in without thinking. My first show had one dealer and thirty-five people attending!"

Since that time, Fred Greenberg's shows have grown into four-day events, such as the *Great Eastern Comic Book Spectacular* taking place in New York's Jacob Javits Convention Center this February, with a projected attendance in the thousands.

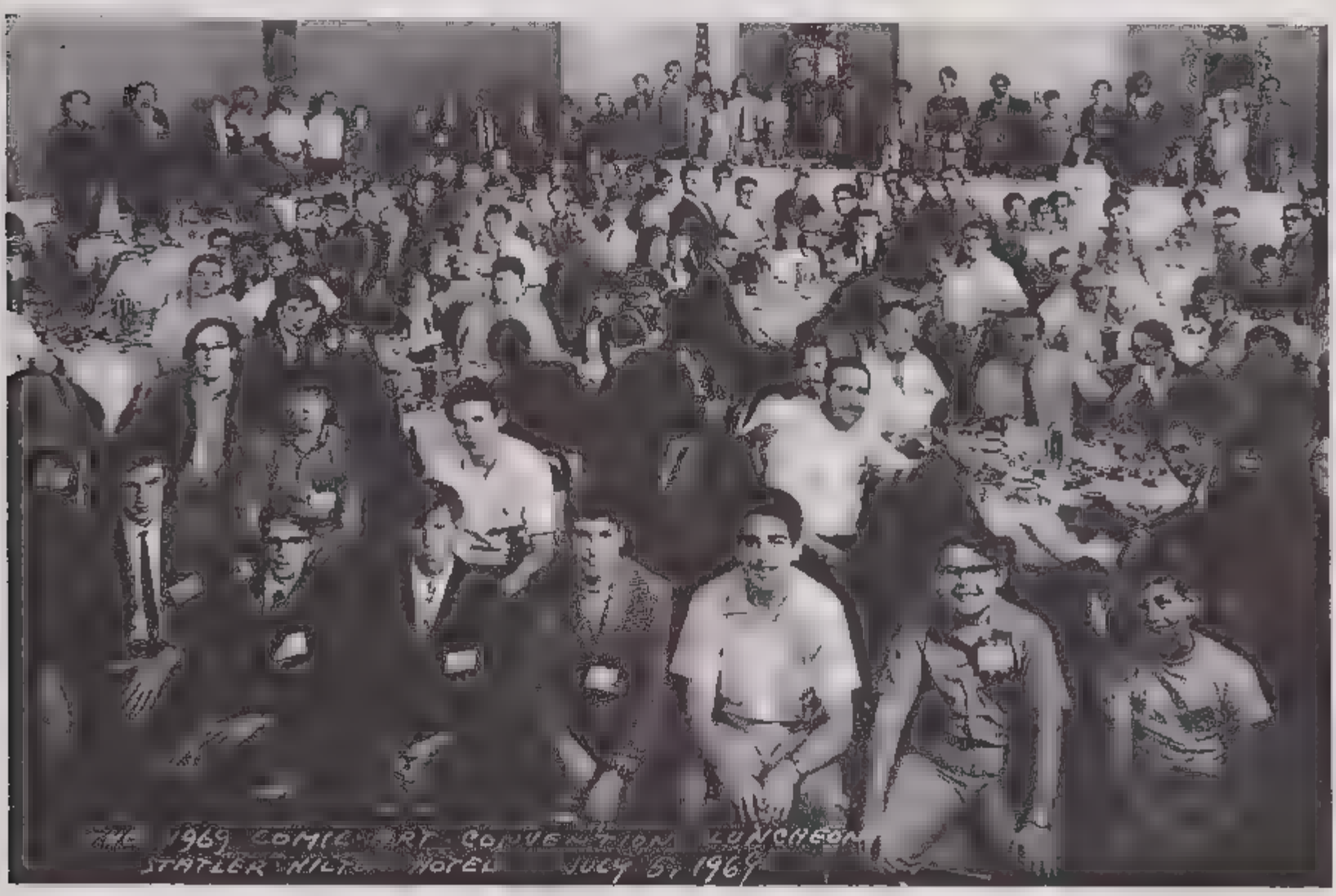
With a history of successful Trading and Sports Cards shows behind him, newcomer David Greenhill has made a serious entry into the world of comics with Philadelphia's *ComicFest 1993*, and a June show slated for New York's Javits Convention Center.

At present, it is possible to find smaller one-day conventions just about every weekend, anywhere in the country. The admission is usually low and they still afford the intimacy of the early comics conventions.

Large scale shows tend to be held in major cities and traditionally have run between June and September, though the convention "season" is becoming increasingly longer. The larger shows have increased in scope and scale so that they have become true spectacles.

There has always been a basic "menu" of events at comics conventions, guest artists, writers, celebrities, panel discussions, the dealers room, a variety of exhibits, costume parades, and some sort of comics-related film program.

As the comics industry becomes




**Believe it or not, Comics were popular before Spawn.**

Banquet Photo from the 1969 Comic Art Convention Luncheon

more complex, so the programming of events at conventions follows suit. With the comics themselves branching out into the different media, conventions have had to strive to include these as well A typical comics convention today might feature a Trade Show, a special Autograph area, giveaways and a variety of parties and activities sponsored by individual comics companies and distributors.

Since the advent of the Direct Distribution market in 1975, there has been an increasing need for the distributors, retailers, and comics companies to get together. What better place than at a comics convention?

Though the distributors have meetings year-round, the Trade Show has become an integral part of the larger comics conventions.

Usually preceding the actual convention dates, the Trade Show is ideally a place for comics companies, creators, distributors and retailers to meet and exchange information, discuss marketing, and voice opinions. At their best, Trade Shows do accomplish this function.

At their worst, Trade Shows degenerate into "greed festivals" where those attending travel from exhibit to exhibit like anxious trick or treaters, collecting the freebies given out by the companies.

The Trade Shows have also made the comics companies more visible to the public in general The increasingly complex exhibits at conventions have made a visual impact, and added an aspect of showmanship not previously seen in the comics industry

Many comics companies must pick and choose carefully which shows they are able to attend, bearing in mind both schedule, and financial restrictions.

As *Chicago ComicCon*'s Nancy Ford pointed out, "The conventions are so intensive..the artists, writers, all of us need a decompression period afterwards You have to be cautious about how many [shows] you can attend."

Signings and autograph seekers are a major complaint for everyone. *San Diego Comic-Con*'s, Fae Desmond expressed her concern over the fact that people would come to a show and spend hours in line waiting for an autograph, rather than enjoy the show and all of the programs available.

In sharp contrast to today's autograph problems, *Great Eastern*'s Fred Greenberg recollects Joe Sinnott, a guest at one of the early shows, being overwhelmed by autograph seekers. His solution was to take all the fans names and addresses. Within a few months of the show, he sent each of them an inked sketch.

The problems of the Trading and Sports Card industry a few years ago has also had its effect on comics conventions, mainly due to card dealers shifting their attention to comics and driving the prices up. As this practice continued, it has helped fuel a growing speculative market in comics.

An additional side-effect of the close association between cards and comics has been the acceptance of trading cards as a means to further market comics.

Trading and Sports Cards have now become standard fare at comics conventions, and space in the dealer's room has increased to accommodate them.

*"I was at a small Sci-Fi show, and I'd made fifty dollars selling comics there. I wanted to get a table for the next show, but the guys running it had already left. I asked if I could schedule a show and was told I could. The cost happened to be fifty dollars! My first show had one dealer and thirty-five people attending!" Fred Greenberg said.*

The Small Press and Independent Publishing trend that began in the mid 1970s, and is now flourishing, has also had an affect on the size of the conventions.

The sheer number of comic books being published currently, has, by necessity, increased the amount of space needed to offer all the comics companies the opportunity to participate in any convention

When asked about what's involved in running a comics convention, *Great Eastern*'s Fred Greenberg offered the following:

"Its not an easy business. Everything's dated, there are always urgent deadlines. There's a tremendous pressure to produce, and run, a quality show. You need to wear a lot of hats though its mostly office work.

"You have to deal with the public and all kinds of people, good and bad, and they all have to be treated equally

"A show requires control, and controls your life. You have to be able to work with that. If you don't love it, you will resent the intrusion."

Vinny Bartilucci of *ComicFest* alluded to the vast amount of preparation time needed to set up a show.

"In July of '92, we started working on *ComicFest'93*, laying out the groundwork, figuring the logistics for the guests, companies and displays; and designing our logo and ads."

With all that goes into staging a comics convention, what can show organizers hope to gain from them? The *San Diego Comic-Con* is very clear in it's objectives. In their own words, "[We are] a non-profit corporation dedicated to creating an awareness of, and appreciation for, comics and related popular art forms, primarily through the presentation of an annual convention that celebrates the historic and ongoing contribution of comics to art and culture."

The *San Diego Comic-Con* is run 99% by volunteers, with only three full time employees. They turn all of the convention's profits over to the next year's show and the comics industry.

"We strive for balance between the longtime supporters, and those who have just realized Superman is still out there," said Fae Desmond. "Our goal is education-oriented."

The *Chicago ComicCon* attempts to give attendees their money's worth, while showing their goodwill and commitment to the public. The partners also see their convention as an extension of their retail comic business, to a certain extent.

Bob Weinberger explained, "We are a for-profit organization, but we've never let that obscure the main idea of the convention. Chicago is a big city, and it deserves a big, good show. A good convention reflects well on the city, the businesses there, and the people running it."

When asked if it was profitable to run a comics convention, Mr Weinberger chuckled:

"If you figured the time we put in versus the money involved, we'd all be making well under the minimum hourly wage! If we were in this only to make money, we'd be the stupidest people in

**Where's the *Comics Values Monthly* Booth?**

Photo courtesy of Great Eastern Conventions

the world!"

*Great Eastern Conventions* has always been profitable, but it's only been in the last few years that Fred Greenberg has considered it possible to support himself and his family through the comics conventions alone.

"I created a world and a job of my own where I'm surrounded by comics, which is what I want," said Greenberg. "But ultimately, I have to make a living. I consider myself to be extremely fortunate in that my avocation has become my advocation."

Speaking for *ComicFest*, Vinny Bartilucci said their goal was, "To get people into reading, not collecting comics; to get new people into comics, not just fans." When asked, he also agreed that it was "very possible" for comics conventions to be profitable.

Comics conventions have come a long way from the old shows that were, according to Greenberg, "[basically] a handful of people sitting around reading comics. 'They weren't slick," he added, "but they had heart."

While enthusiasm for comics still reigns at conventions, there is definitely a new attitude. Comics are Big Business. Monetary considerations play a big part in today's shows. The speculative atmosphere has always been present, yet never so significant.

Comics conventions now have large advertising budgets, and spend a great deal of time and money getting the public interested in attending their shows.

And a successful convention breeds competition. There are a lot of newcomers entering the show arena.

Bob Weinberger warns prospective show organizers, "if you expect to get into conventions for the money, you'll be disappointed."

All of the people interviewed for this article agreed that a good show will motivate people to go to other shows. Conversely, a bad show, one motivated by money or run by people who don't care about comics, can repel people.

We can all expect future conventions to keep growing. All of the current comics conventions have plans for larger shows, more interactive programming, higher quality standards, and expansion in general.

At present, the large comics conventions are regional affairs. The East Coast has *Great Eastern Conventions* and ComicFest, the Central United States has the *Chicago ComicCon*, and the West Coast has the *San Diego Comic-Con*.

Apart from what we can expect and hope for, we can also affect the comics conventions of the future. Write to the show organizers - they want your feedback! Let them know what you want from conventions, and what you look forward to. Thank them for putting on the shows that they do. Ask them for the shows they haven't yet done.

In the meantime, we thank convention organizers for providing a forum where both fans and professionals can meet to discuss the "finer points comicdom."

## FEBRUARY

**Feb 2: CA, Riverside.** The Main Event. 12321 Sampson Ave., Unit R 5-10 **A:Free** Don Hughes (909)780-4555

**Feb 2: CA, Walnut.** Baseball Cards, Comics, McDonald's & Racing Collectibles. Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr. N. 5-9:30 **A:Free** Frank (909)594-7492.

**Feb 3: OH, Mentor.** Comic Books, Non-Sportscards, Sportscards, and Racing Collectibles Show. Travelodge Hotel, 7701 Reynolds Rd. 6-10 **A:$1** Irene Pike (216)255-2606.

**Feb 4: CT, Milford.** Baseball Card and Comic Book Mania. K of C Hall, 625 Bridgeport Ave. (Exit 34 off I-95, left on Rt. 1) 6-10 **A:$1** Aurella Wacks (203)874-3545.

**Feb 4: CT, North Haven.** Sportscard & Comic Book Bonanza. Holiday Inn of North Haven, Exit 12 off I-91. 6-10 **A:$1**, Frank or Nas (203)231-3305

**Feb 4: NY, Brooklyn.** Brooklyn's Friday Night Show. St. Dominick's Church, 20th Ave and Bayridge Pkwy (75th St). 6-10 **A:Free** Scotty O'Donnell (718)251-2075.

**Feb 5: CA, North Hollywood.** The Valley Cards, Comics and Collectibles Show. Beverly Garland Hotel, 4222 Vineland Ave. 10-5 **A:Free** Donna Arnott (818)247-9775.

**Feb 5: CA, Walnut.** Baseball Cards, Comics, McDonald's & Racing Collectibles. Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr N 5-9:30 **A:Free** Frank (909)594-7492.

**Feb 5: CT, N. Branford.** Clubhouse Comic and Card Show. VFW Hall, Rte 22. 10-4 **A:$1** Rob Smith (203)458-3234.

**Feb 5: CT, Waterbury.** Sportscard & Comic Book Bonanza. Ramada Inn (formerly Red Bull Inn), Exit 25 off I-84 East or West. 9-3 **A:$2**, Frank or Nas (203)231-3305

**Feb 5: IN, Ft Wayne.** Jubilee Comic Book Con, Holiday Inn, Exit 109A (off I-69) 10-4 Jubilee Enterprises (301)292-4587.

**Feb 5: IN, Michigan City.** Comic Book and Sports Card Show. American Legion Franklin Miller Post 37, 756 E. US Hwy 20. (40 tables) 10-3 **A:Free** Joe Jurek (219)659-4947.

**Feb 5: NC, Durham.** Carboard Heroes Comics and Sportscards Show. Holiday Inn W., 3460 Hillsborough Rd. (36 tables) 9-4 **A:$1.50** Buddy Carter (804)231-1969.

**Feb 5: NY, Bayside.** Sports Cards, Comic Books, Memorabilia. Adria Motor Inn, 220-33 Northern Blvd. 10-4 **A:Free** Reeni's ComiCardarie (718)460-9758.

**Feb 5: NY, Floral Park LI.** Comics, Sportscards and Non-Sportscards. St. Hedwig's Parish Hall, 309 Jericho Tpke. 9:30-4 **A:$1** Ken Blitz (516)248-4235.

**Feb 5: TN, Chattanoga.** Comic & Sports Cards. Days Inn, I-75 Eastridge Exit, 1400 N. Macksmith Rd. 9-4 **A:$1.50** Clay Pogue (615)962-2354

**Feb 5-6: CA, Riverside.** The Main Event. 12321 Sampson Ave., Unit R. 10-5 **A:Free** Don Hughes (909)780-4555.

**Feb 5-6: FL, Clearwater.** Comics, Sportscards, and Non-Sportscards Show. Sunshine Mall, Corner of Missouri and Druid. Mall Hours **A:Free** Gary Nagle (407)846-3429.

**Feb 5-6: FL, Ft. Meyers.** Baseball Card, Comic Book, and Memoribilia Show. Edison Mall. Sat 10-9, Sun 12-5 **A:Free** Marge Hankanson (813)574-7731

**Feb 5-6: FL, Fort Lauderdale.** Comics and Cards Show. Coral Ridge Mall, Oakland Park Blvd. Sat 10-6, Sun 11-5 **A:Free** Jerry Pepper (800)758-7976.

**Feb 5-6: VA, Virginia Beach.** Comics, Sports Cards, Racing, and Sci-Fi Show. Pembroke Mall, Independence and Virginia Beach Blvds. (95 tables) Sat 10-9, Sun 12:30-5:30 Larry Webster (804)486-5870.

**Feb 5-6: WA, Tacoma.** Sports Card & Comic Supershow. Lakewood Mall (in main mall) 10509 Gravelly Lake Dr SW. Sat:10-6, Sun: 11-6, **A:Free** Twin Oaks Sportshows (206)820-0218

**Feb 6: Orlando.** Orlando Comic Book Mega-Show II, Holiday Inn, 6515 International Dr. 10-4:30. **A:$3** Skyline Promotions (407)426-7745

**Feb 6: IL, Crystal Lake.** Nonsmoking Sports Card & Comic Book Show Holiday Inn, Rt. 31 & Three Oaks Road (2 mi.S of Rt. 176). 10-3 **A:$1** Louis Pinsky (708)309-8204

**Feb 6: IL, Oak Lawn.** Oak Lawn Comics and Cards Show. Fatima K of C, 5830 W. 95th St. 9-3 **A:$1** John Leary (708)423-1758.

**Feb 6: IN, Hammond.** Comic Book and Sports Card Show. American Inn, 4000 Calumet Ave. 10-3 **A:$1** Joe Jurek (219)659-4947.

**Feb 6: LA, Baton Rouge.** Baseball Card and Comic Book Show. Holiday Inn South, I-12 & Airline Hwy. 10-5 **A:$1** Tony Barcellona, (504)654-6228.

**Feb 6: MA, Boston.** Boston Comic Book Convention. Howard Johnson, 57 Park Plaza, 200 Stuart St. 10-5 **A:$3** F Greenberg (908)788-6845.

**Feb 6: MI, Kalamazoo.** Jubilee Comic Book Con, Holiday Inn (Airport) 3522 Sprinkle Rd (off I-94) 10-4 Jubilee Enterprises (301)292-4587

**Feb 6: MI, Royal Oak.** Encore-Con Comic Book Show. American Legion hall, 1815 Rochester Rd. (45 tables) 10-4 **A:$2** Michael Goldman (313)350-2633.

**Feb 6: NJ, Hazlet.** Collectors Showcase Baseball Card and Comic Book Show Ramada Inn, 2870 Rt. 35. (50 tables) 9.30-3:30 **A:$2** Sandy Grecco (908)291-1632.

**Feb 6: NJ, Wayne.** Wayne Collectibles Show. CO #1 Firemen's Conventions Center, Parish Dr off Rte 202 N. (110 tables) 9-4 **A:Free** Phil DeMario (201)696-6217.

**Feb 6: NY, East Meadow LI.** LI Monthly Comic Book and Baseball Card Show. Coliseum Motor Inn, 1650 Hempstead Tpke. 10-4 Starwind Comics (716)672-2913.

**Feb 6: NY, Hicksville.** Hicksville Monthly Comic Book and Card Show (special appearance by Michael Jan Friedman). Jerusalem Ave, Corner of Maglie Dr. (32 tables) 10-4 **A:$1** Joel Kirsch (516)799-6412.

**Feb 6: NY, Rockville Centre LI.** LI Comic Book and Collector's Market Convention. Holiday Inn, 173 Sunrise Hwy. (over 40 dealers) 10-5 **A:Free** Cosmic Comics of Oceanside (516)763-1133.

**Feb 6: NY, Saratoga Springs.** St Clement's Monthly Baseball Card and Comic Book Show. St Clement's School Gym, 231 Lake Ave 1-5 **A:$1** Rocky Rosato (518)584-1429.

**Feb 6: NY, Stonybrook.** King of Commons Baseball Card and Comic Book Show Holiday Inn Express, 3131 Nesconset Hwy. (20+ tables) 10-4 **A:$1** Vince Rizzo (516)689-8138.

**Feb 6: OH, Lancaster.** Camalot Comic Convention. Holiday Inn, 1858 Memorial Dr. 10-4 **A:$3** Troy Williams (614)982-2331.

**Feb 6: PA, Philadelphia.** Serendipity. Holiday Inn at King of Prussia Mall. **A:$3** Bob Horn (410)398-6685.

**Feb 6: PA, Philadelphia.** Sportscards and Comic Book Show. Best Western Hotel, 11580 Roosevelt Blvd. 10-4 **A:$1** Greg Petrino (215)968-8577

**Feb 6: VA, Fredericksburg.** Cardboard Heroes Comics and Sportscard Show 543 Warrenton Rd, Exit 133 off I95. 9-4 **A:$1.50** Buddy (804)231-1969.

**Feb 6: VA, Norfolk.** All Star Baseball Card and Comic Book Show. Lake Wright Quality Inn, I64, Northampton Blvd. exit. 10-4 **A:Free** Alan Prescott (804)545-0857.

**Feb 8: NY, Nanuet.** Tuesday Night Monthly Card Show. Nanuet Days Inn, 260 W. Rte 59. 5:30-10 **A.Free** Fred Erps (914)627-2613.

**Feb 8: OH, Youngstown.** Midwest Comics and Sportscards. Ramada Inn, I80 and Belmont Ave. 6-10 **A:$1** Chuck Vernon (216)399-3843.

**Feb 8: NJ, Montvale.** Montvale Collectible Card and Comic Show. Montvale Ramada Inn, 100 Chestnut Ridge Rd. 5-10 **A:$2** Robert Contuno (201)342-8980.

**Feb 9: CA, Riverside.** The Main Event. 12321 Sampson Ave., Unit R. 5-10 **A:Free** Don Hughes (909)780-4555

**Feb 9: CA, Walnut.** Baseball Cards, Comics, McDonald's & Racing Collectibles. Frank and Son Warehouse. 19465 East Walnut Dr. N. 5-9:30 **A:Free** Frank (909)594-7492.

**Feb 9: OH, Akron.** Comic Books, Non-Sports Cards, Sportscards, and Racing Collectibles Show. Akron Fairlawn Holiday Inn, 4073 Medina Rd., I77 and Rt. 18. 6-10 **A:$1** Irene Pike (216)255-2606.

**Feb 9: OH, Ashtabula/ Austinburg.** Midwest Comics and Sportscards Holiday Inn, I90 and Rte 45. 6-10 **A:$1** Chuck Vernon (216)399-3843.

**Feb 10: NJ, Woodbridge.** Woodbridge Monthly Thursday Night Sports Card, Comic and Non-Sports Card Show. Budget Motor Lodge, Rte. 9 N. 5-9:30 **A:$1** Ron Fridkis (908)583-7915.

**Feb 10: NY, Deer Park.** Comic book Show, Sons of Italy, 2075 Deer Park Ave. 6-10 **A:Free.** Paul (516)289-7398.

**Feb 10: NY, Forest Hills Queens.** Card and Comic Book Show. American Legion Post 1424, 107-15 Metropolitan Ave. Don Baldi (718)277-5161.

**Feb 11-12: NJ, North Paramus.** Sports World Collectible Card and Comic Show. Sportsworld, 200 Rte. 17. Fri 5-10, Sat 10-5 **A:Free** Rob Contino (201)342-8980.

**Feb 11-13: NY, New York.** New York Comic Book Spectacular. Jacob Javits Convention Center, 655 W. 34th St. Fri 1-7, Sat 10-6, Sun 11-6 **A:Call for various packages** F. Greenberg (908)788-6845.

**Feb 12: CA, Pasadena.** The Pasadena Cards, Comics and Collectibles Show. Pasadena Center, 300 E. Green St. 10-5 **A:Free** Donna Arnott (818)247-9775.

**Feb 12: CA, Walnut.** Baseball Cards, Comics, McDonald's & Racing Collectibles. Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr. N. 5-9:30 **A:Free** Frank (909)594-7492.

**Feb 12: CT, Naugatuck.** Baseball Card and Comic Book Show Elk's Lodge 967, Rubber Ave. 9-3 **A:Free** Thomas Bryk (203)723-9289.

**Feb 12: NC, Fayetteville.** Toys, Comics, Sportscards, Records, and Racing Collectibles Charlie rose Expo Center, Hwy 301 S. 9-5 **A:$4** Carolina Hobby Expo (704)786-8373.

**Feb 12: NJ, Hawthorne.** Bill's Monthly Comic, Card and Collectible Show. Elk's Lodge, 131 Wagaraw Rd. 10-4 **A:$1** Bill (201)423-2849

**Feb 12: NJ, South Plainfield.** Monthly Card & Comic Show. 910 Oak Tree Road. 10-6 **A:Free** Michael Waldbaum (908)757-8827.

**Feb 12: NJ, Woodbridge.** Four Color Comic Art Convention Sheraton Hotel, 515 Rt. 1 So. 10-4 **A:$3** Ron Jordan (908)828-5955.

**Feb 12: NY, Bronx.** Finest Collector's Baseball Card and Comic Book Show. Fergus II, 5790 Mosholu Ave., Riverdale 10-6 **A:$1** Georgina Nieves (914)376-3499.

**Feb 12: NY, Brooklyn.** Comic Show. K of C, 135 Conklin Ave. 12-7 **A:Free** John Shellman (718)531-3035.

**Feb 12: NY, Brooklyn.** Carmine's Sports Cards & Comic Book Show. St. Athanasius Auditorium, 6102 Bay Parkway. 10-4 **A:Free** Carmine Russotti (718)421-4919

**Feb 12: NY, Hauppauge.** King of Commons Baseball Card and Comic Show. Marriott Wind Watch Hotel, 1717 Motor Parkway. (40 tables) 10-4 **A:$1** Vince Rizzo (516)689-8138.

**Feb 12: NY, New York.** Comics & Cards Show. Our Lady of Good Counsel School, 323 E 91st St (btwn 1st & 2nd Aves). 10-4 **A:$1** Kevin (718)721-2172.

**Feb 12: NY, Ronkonkoma.** Comic Book and Baseball Card Show. Holiday Inn, McArthur Airport, 3848 Vets Hwy. 10-4 **A:$1** Dennis (516)724-7422

**Feb 12: PA, Langhorne.** Sportscard and Comics Show Sheraton Bucks County, 400 Oxford Valley Rd. 9-3 **A:$1** Greg Petrino (215)968-8577.

**Feb 12: TX, Arlington.** Sportscard and Comics Show Comfort Inn. 10-5 **A:$2** Duane Bates (817)276-8794.

**Feb 12-13: CA, Riverside.** The Main Event. 12321 Sampson Ave., Unit R. 10-5 **A:Free** Don Hughes (909)780-4555.

**Feb 12-13: FL, Fort Lauderdale.** Comic and Cards Show. Coral Ridge Mall, Oakland Park Blvd.



**Please note: all show information must be received at least two months in advance.**

Sat 10-7, Sun 11-5 **A:Free** Jerry Pepper (305)386-4099

**Feb 12-13: FL, St. Petersburg.** Comics, Sportscards, and Non-Sportscards Show. Gateway mall, 7885 9th St. N. Mall Hours **A:Free** Gary Nagle (407)846-3429.

**Feb 12-13: OH, Akron.** Akron-Canton Comic Con. Tadmor Hall, 3000 Krebs Dr., I77 at Exit 120. Sat 11-6, Sun 10-4 **A:$6** Jeff Harper (216)499-6056.

**Feb 12-13: RI, Providence.** 1st Providence Collectibles Extravaganza. Providence Convention Center, off Rte. 95 10-5 **A:$5** Gary Sohmers (508)229-2662.

**Feb 13: CT, Milford.** Baseball Card and Comic Book Mania. K of C, 625 Bridgeport Ave. (Exit 34 off I-95, left on Rt. 1) 9:30-3:30 **A:$2** Aurella Wacks (203)874-3545.

**Feb 13: CT, Wallingford.** Toys & Trains. Zandri's Stillwood Inn, 1074 S Colony Rd, US Rte 5, exit 13 off I-91. 9-2 **A:$4** Mike Martino (203)469-9048.

**Feb 13: DE, Wilmington.** Serendipity. Ramada Inn, Rte 202 and Rte 1 in Chadds Ford, PA. **A:$3** Bob Horn (410)398-6685.

**Feb 13: IL, Bloomingdale.** Silver Reef Card and Comic Show Indian Lakes Country Club, 250 West Schick Rd 9:30-4 **A:$1** William Mueller (708)351-1799.

**Feb 13: IL, Crystal Lake.** Nonsmoking Sports Card & Comic Book Show. Holiday Inn, Rt. 31 & Three Oaks Road (2 mi S of Rt. 176). 10-3 **A:$1** Louis Pinsky (708)309-8204.

**Feb 13: LA, Lafayette.** Comic Book and Sportscard Show. 2716 NE Evangeline Thruway. 10-5 **A:$1** Slim Bankston (504)344-8655.

**Feb 13: MD, Annapolis.** Jubilee Comic Book Con, Ramada Hotel 173 Jennifer Rd (Off Rt #50) 10-4 Jubilee Enterprises (301)292-4587.

**Feb 13: MD, Hunt Valley.** Clandestine Comic Book Show. Embassy Suites Hotel, 213 International Cir. 11-4 **A:$1** Fred Edeson (410)252-4324

**Feb 13: MI, East Lansing.** Spartan Comic Book Show. Kellogg Center, Big Ten Room A, Michigan University, Harrison St. and Grand River Ave. 10-4 **A:$2** Michael Goldman (313)350-2633

**Feb 13: NJ, Bordentown.** Four Color Comic Art Convention. Days Inn, Rt. 206 N. 10-4 **A:$3** Ron Jordan )908)828-5955.

**Feb 13: NJ, Bricktown.** Comic and Cards Convention. Temple Beth, 200 Van Zile Rd. 10-4 **A:$2** Dennis Reid (908)308-0384.

**Feb 13: NJ, Flemington.** Comics and Cards Show. Elks Club, Rte 31. 10-4 **A:Free** Ken Wisnefski (908)479-6603

**Feb 13: NJ, Livingston.** Sports Card and Comics Show. Livingston Holiday Inn. 9:30-4:30 **A:Free** Rocco Slino (201)533-0325.

**Feb 13: NY, Brooklyn.** Comic Book and Sports Card Show. Temple Emanuel, 1880 Rockaway Pkway. 10-4 **A:Free** Marty Margulis (516)795-4628

**Feb 13: VA, Alexandria.** Cardboard Heroes Comics and Sportscard Show. Quality Inn, 6461 Edsall Rd. (33 tables) 9-4 **A:$1.50** Buddy Carter (804)231-1969

**Feb 13: WA, Bothell.** Winterfest Sports Card & Comic Show Knights of Columbus Hall 24123 Bothell Hwy. Exit 26 off I405 10-5 **A:Free** Twin Oaks Sportshows (206)820-0218

**Feb 15: NY, Rego Park Queens.** Comic Book and Sportscard Show Rego Park Jewish Center 9-3:30 Queens Blvd & 67 **A:$1** Marty Margulis 516 795-4628

**Feb 16: CA, Riverside.** The Main Event. 12321 Sampson Ave., Unit R. 5-10 **A:Free** Don Hughes (909)780-4555.

**Feb 16: CA, Walnut.** Baseball Cards, Comics, McDonald's & Racing Collectibles. Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr. N. 5-9:30 **A:Free** Frank (909)594-7492.

**Feb 17: MA, Foxboro.** The Original Baseball Card Night Show. Demetris Convention Center and Sports Bar, 2 Washington St. 5:30-10 **A:$1** Steve Lacasse (508)699-6243

**Feb 17: NJ, East Brunswick.** Mid State Monthly Thursday Night Sports Card and Comic Book Show. Midstate Bowl, Midstate Mall, Rte 18 N. 5-9:30 Ron Fridkis (908)583-7915.

**Feb 17: NJ, Wayne.** Wayne Collectibles Show. CO #1 Firemen's Convention Center, Parish Dr. off Rte 202 N 5-10 **A:Free** Phil DeMario (201)696-6217.

**Feb 17: PA, Erie.** Midwest Comics and Sportscards. Holiday Inn, I90, Exit 7. 6-10 **A:$1** Chuck Vernon (216)399-3843

**Feb 17: RI, Woonsocket.** Comics and Sportscard Show. Elks Hall, 380 Social St. 6-10 **A:$1** Bill Bryda (401)765-0934.

**Feb 17-20: MA, Chicopee.** Cards and Comics Show. Fairfield Mall, Rte 33, exit 5 off Mass Pike. Mall Hours **A:Free** Bill Gouvalaris (617)289-8662.

**Feb 18: NY, Brooklyn.** Brooklyn's Friday Night Show St Dominic's Church, 20th Ave and Bayridge Pkwy 75th St 6 to 10 **A:Free** Scotty O'Donnell (718) 251-2075

**Feb 18: NY, Stonybrook.** King of Commons Baseball Card and Comic Book Show Holiday Inn Express, 3131 Nesconset Hwy, Rte 347. 6-10 **A:$1** Vince Rizzo (516)471-8000.

**Feb 18-20: OH, Dayton.**(C),(NS),(T),(SF),(F)&(H). Hara Arena & Expo Center, 1001 Shiloh Springs Road. Fri:5-9, Sat:10-6; Sun 11-5; **A:$4**, Genesis Promotion (317)472-7921.

**Feb 18-20: VA, Newport News.** Comic and Cards Convention. Patrick Henry Mall, Jefferson Ave. Sat 10-9, Sun 12-5:30 **A:Free** Tom Morey (804)557-0669

**Feb 19: CA, North Hollywood.** The Valley Cards, Comics and Collectibles Show. Beverly Garland Hotel, 4222 Vineland Ave. 10-5 **A:Free** Donna Arnott (818)247-9775

**Feb 19: CT, Milford.** Baseball Card and Comic Book Mania. K of C, 625 Bridgeport Ave (Exit 34 off I-95, left on Rt. 1). 9:30-3:30 **A:$2** Aurella Wacks (203)874-3545.

**Feb 19: CT, Waterbury.** Sportscard & Comic Book Bonanza. Ramada Inn (formerly Red Bull Inn), Exit 25 off I-84 East or West. 9-3 **A:$2**, Frank or Nas (203)231-3305

**Feb 19: FL, Sunrise.** Big Guys Cards and Comics. 4163 N. Pine Island Rd. 10-8 **A:Free** Steve Levin (305)742-0828

**Feb 19: IL, Wilmette.** Comic Book & Sports Card Show. Masonic Temple of Wilmette, 1010 Central Ave. (I-94 Exit Lake Ave.) 10-3 **A:Free** Joe Jurek (219)659-4947

**Feb 19: IN, Portage.** Comic Book and Sports Card Show. Days Inn, 6161 Melton Rd. 10-3 **A:$1** Joe Jurek (219)659-4947.

**Feb 19: NC, Clemmons.** Toys, Trains, and Racing Collectibles. Holiday Inn, I40, exit 184. 9-4 **A:$3** Carolina Hobby Expo (704)786-8373.

**Feb 19: NC, Raleigh.** Cardboard Heroes Comics and Sportscard Show N Raleigh Hilton 3415 Wake Forest Rd 9-4 **A:$1.50** Buddy Carter 804-231-1969

**Feb 19: NY, Brooklyn.** Pratt Area Cards and Comics Show. St. Luke's Parish Hall, 259 Washington Ave. 10-5 **A:Free** June Solla (718)783-6837.

**Feb 19: NY, Levittown.** Comic, Sportcards $ Non-sportscards. Tri-County Flea Market, 3041 Hempstead Tpk. 10-5 **A:Free** Marc Burns (516)864-2926.

**Feb 19: NY, Lynbrook.** Monthly Baseball Card and Comic Book Show. St. Mary's K of C, 78 Hempstead Ave. 10-4 **A:$1** Paul (516)289-7398

**Feb 19: OH, Cincinnati.** Jubilee Comic Book Con, Holiday Inn I-275 & US 42, Exit 46. 10-4 Jubilee Enterprises (301)292-4587

**Feb 19-20: CA, Riverside.** The Main Event. 12321 Sampson Ave., Unit R. 10-5 **A:Free** Don Hughes (909)780-4555.

**Feb 19-20: CA, Walnut.** Baseball Cards, Comics, McDonalds and Racing Collectibles Show. Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr. N. 10-5 **A:Free** Jim (909)594-7492.

**Feb 19-20: FL, Lakeland.** Lakeland Sportscard and Comic Book Show. Lakeland Mall, 1108 E. Memorial Blvd. 10-5 **A:Free** Don Celoria (813)686-9043

**Feb 19-20: FL, Miami.** Comics and Cards Show. Mall of the Americas, Flagler St. at Palmetto Expwy. Sat 10-9, Sun 11-5 **A:Free** Jerry Pepper (305) 386-4099.

**Feb 19-20: FL, Naples.** Baseball Card, Comic Book, and Memoribilia Show. Coastland Center Mall. Sat 10-9, Sun 12-5 **A:Free** Marge Hankanson (813)574-7731.

**Feb 19-20: NJ, South Plainfield.** World of Cards & Comics Convention. Middlesex Mall, Shelton Rd. Sat 10-9:30, Sun 11-5 **A:Free** Tony (908)968-3886.

**Feb 19-20: NY, Hempstead.** LI Sports and Comic Collector Show. Hofstra U. Student Center. Sat 10-5, Sun 10-5. **A:$3** Allan Lerner (516)752-7557

**Feb 19-20: OH, Mentor.** Comic Book & Non-Sports Card Show (also Toys). Travelodge Hotel of Mentor, 7701 Reynolds Rd ,(Rts. 2 & 306). **A:$1.50** Irene Pike, Infield Promotions (216)255-2606

**Feb 19-20: WA, Olympia.** Sports Card & Comic Supershow. Capital Mall, Hwy. 101 Exit off I-5, Black Lake Blvd. Exit off Hwy 101, Sat:10-6, Sun: 11-6 **A:Free** Twin Oaks Sportshows (206)820-0218

**Feb 20: CA, Buena Park.** Comics and Cards Collectible Show. Sequoia Athletic Club, 7530 Orangethorpe Ave. 10-4 **A:$3** Derek Borthwick (818)913-4046.

**Feb 20: DE, Newark.** Comics and Sports Cards Show. Holiday Inn, Rte I95 and 273, exit 3. 10-4 **A:$1** Ken Condiff (302)737-3332

**Feb 20: FL, Tallahassee.** Tallahassee Comic Book Mega-Show, Holiday Inn, 316 W. Tennessee St. 10-4:30. **A:$3** Skyline Promotions (407)426-7745

**Feb 20: IL, Crystal Lake.** Nonsmoking Sports Card & Comic Book Show. Holiday Inn, Rt. 31 & Three Oaks Road (2 mi.S of Rt. 176). 10-3 **A:$1** Louis Pinsky (708)309-8204.

**Feb 20: IN, Fort Wayne.** Fort Wayne's Premier Card and Comic Show. Ramada Inn, I69, exit 105A, S.R. 14. 10-4 Greg Mayne (219)824-4238

**Feb 20: MD, Baltimore.** Jubilee Comic Book Con, Days Hotel, I-83, Exit 17, Timonium. 10-4 Jubilee Enterprises (301)292-4587.

**Feb 20: MI, Livonia.** X-Trava Con Comic Book Show. K of C Hall 19801 Farmington Rd. 10-4 **A:$2** Michael Goldman (313)350-2633.

**Feb 20: MO, Springfield.** Comic & Sports Card Show. Shearton Inn, 333 South Glenstone (2 blocks South of Battlefield Mall). 10-4 **A:$1** Ben Cohen (417)889-2529

**Feb 20: NC, Fayetteville.** Cardboard Heroes Comics and Sportscard Show. Howard Johnson Plaza Hotel, Cedar Creek Rd. (38 tables) 9-4 **A:$1.50** Buddy Carter (804)231-1969.

**Feb 20: NJ, Garfield.** Cards, Comics, and Collectibles. Garfield Boys and Girls Club, 490 Midland Ave. 10-4 **A:$1** Gary (201)340-2218.

**Feb 20: NJ, Howell.** Comic and Cards Convention. Great American Flea Market, 2301 Hwy. 9 N. 10-5 **A:$2** Dennis Reid (908)308-0384.

**Feb 20: NJ, Montvale.** Montvale Collectible Card and Comic Show. Montvale Ramada Inn, 100 Chestnut Ridge Rd. 9:30-4 **A:$2** Rob Contino (201)342-8980.

**Feb 20: NY, Bayshore.** CS Collectibles. Masonic Temple, 2 Union Blvd, W or 5th Ave. 10-4 **A:Free** Stanley (516)242-2266

**Feb 20: OH, Columbus.** Jubilee Comic Book Con, Holiday Inn, East I-70 & Hamilton Rd Exit 107. 10-4 Jubilee Enterprises (301)292-4587.

**Feb 20: PA, Pittsburgh.** Pittsburgh Comic Book Convention. Sheraton at Station Square. 10-4 **A:$3** F. Greenberg (908)788-6845.

**Feb 23: CA, Riverside.** The Main Event 12321 Sampson Ave., Unit R. 5-10 **A:Free** Don Hughes (909)780-4555.

**Feb 23: CA, Walnut.** Baseball Cards, Comics, McDonald's & Racing Collectibles. Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr. N. 5-9:30 **A:Free** Frank (909)594-7492.

**Feb 23: NY, Seaford.** Wednesday Night Comic Book and Sports Card Show. South Street Restaurant, 3882 Sunrise Hwy. (32 tables) 6-10 **A:$1** Marty Margulis (516)795-4628.

**Feb 23: OH, Cleveland.** Comic Books, Non-Sportscards, Sportscards, and Racing Collectibles Show. Cleveland Airport Marriott, 4277 W. 150th St. 6:30-10 **A:$1** Irene Pike

Please note: all show information must be received at least two months in advance.

(216)255-2606.

**Feb 24: NY, Oceanside.** Monthly Comic Book Show. Sons of Italy, 3015 Long Beach Rd 6-10 A:Free Paul (516)289-7398.

**Feb 24-27: NH, Salem.** Comics and Cards Show Old Rockingham Mall, Rte 28 at Mass Border Mall Hours A:Free Bill Gouvalaris (617)289-8662

**Feb 25-26: NJ, North Paramus.** Sports World Collectible Card and Comic Show Sportsworld, 200 Rte. 17 Fri 5-10, Sat 10-5 A:Free Rob Contino (201)342-8980

**Feb 26: CA, Pasadena.** The Pasadena Cards, Comics and Collectibles Show Pasadena Center, 300 E. Green St. 10-5 A:Free Donna Arnott (818)247-9775.

**Feb 26: CA, Walnut.** Baseball Cards, Comics, McDonald's & Racing Collectibles. Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr. N 5-9:30 A:Free Frank (909)594-7492.

**Feb 26: IN, Crown Point.** Comic Book & Sports Card Show Pine Island Apartments Clubhouse Complex, 8118 International Drive (S of Rte 30 & E of Rte 41) 10:30-3 A:$1 Joe Jurek (219)659-4947

**Feb 26: MD, Silver Spring.** Jubilee Comic Book Con, Armory Place, 925 Wayne Ave. 10-4 Jubilee Enterprises (301)292-4587

**Feb 26: MI, Midland.** Comic Book and Sports Card Show Ramada Inn, 1815 Saginaw Rd. 10-5 A:Free Jim Knarr (517)631-4976

**Feb 26: NC, Greensboro.** Cardboard Heroes Comics and Sportscard Show Howard Johnson Plaza Hotel, 415 Swing Rd. (40 tables) 9-4 A:$1.50 Buddy Carter (804)231-1969.

**Feb 26: NJ, Carteret.** Comic and Cards Show St. Demetrius Pavilion, 681 Roosevelt Ave, exit 12 off NJ Tpke. A:$1.50 Sergio Candido (908)855-5852

**Feb 26: NJ, Hillsborough.** World of Cards and Comics Convention. Hillsborough Fire Co. #2, 375 Rte 206. 10-4 A:$1.50 Tony Grimando (908)968-3886.

**Feb 26: TX, Arlington.** Sportscard and Comics Show Comfort Inn. 10-5 A:$2 Duane Bates (817)276-8794.

**Feb 26-27: CA, Riverside.** The Main Event. 12321 Sampson Ave., Unit R. 10-5 A.Free Don Hughes (909)780-4555

**Feb 26-27: MA, Lowell.** The Lowell Toy and Collectibles Convention. Sheraton Inn, exit 39 off Rte. 495. 9-4 A:$4 Bob Lefrancois (508)453-6534.

**Feb 26-27: IL, Oak Park.** Blast From The Past Collectible Toy Show. 19th Centry Women's Club 178 North Forest Ave., Joe Pesoie (708)241-0925

**Feb 26-27: NJ, Pennsauken.** South Jersey Comic Expo South Jersey Expo Center, Rte 73 10-5 A.$4 Greg Petrino (215)968-8577

**Feb 26-27: TN, Knoxville.** Comic & Sports Cards. Ramada Inn, Exit 378 Cedar Bluff, 1 block from I40&75, 11-5 A:$1.50 Clay Pogue (615)962-2354.

**Feb 26-27: WA, Marysville.** Sports Card & Comic Marathon. Marysville Mall Exit 199 off I-5, Sat.10-6, Sun. 11-6 A:Free Twin Oaks Sportshows (206)820-0218

**Feb 27: CT, Milford.** Sports Card Show K of C Hall, 625 Bridgeport Ave (Exit 34 off I-95, left on Rt. 1) 9:30-3:30 A:$1 Bill Walsh (203)878-4101.

**Feb 27: FL, Miami.** Miami Comic Book Convention. Crown Sterling Suites, Miami Int'l Airport. 11-5 A:$3 F Greenberg (908)788-6845

**Feb 27: IL, Crystal Lake.** Nonsmoking Sports Card & Comic Book Show Holiday Inn, Rt. 31 & Three Oaks Road (2 mi.S of Rt. 176). 10-3 A:$1 Louis Pinsky (708 309-8204

**Feb 27: IL, Orland Park.** Orland Park Comics and Cards Show Civic Center, one block west of LaGrange Rd at 147th St. 9-3 A:$1 John Leary (708)423-1758

**Feb 27: IL, Wheeling.** Silver Reef Cards and Comics. Chevy Chase Country Club, 1000 North Milwaukee Ave. 9:30-4 A:$1 William Mueller (708)351-1799

**Feb 27: MI, Saginaw.** Comic Book and Sports Card Show Sheraton Inn, 1675 and Tittabawassee Rd. 10-3 A:Free Jim Knarr (517)631-1976

**Feb 27: NC, Greenville.** Cardboard Heroes Sportscard and Comics Show Hilton Inn. 207 SW Greenville Blvd. (35 tables) 9-4 A:$1.50 Buddy Carter (804)231-1969

**Feb 27: NJ, Clifton.** Cards, Comics, and Collectibles Clifton Boys and Girls Club, 802 Clifton Ave. 10-4 A:$1 Gary (201)340-2218.

**Feb 27: NJ, Springfield.** World of Cards and Comic Book Conventions. Holiday Inn, 304 US Rte 22 W 10-4 A:$1.50 Tony Grimando (908)968-3886

**Feb 27: NY, Farmingdale.** CS Collectibles Masonic Temple, 197 Hempstead Tpke, Rte 24 10-4 A:Free Stanley (516)242-2286

**Feb 27: OR, Portland.** Portland Comic Book Show #37 Memorial Coliseum, 1401 N Wheeler 10-5 A:$2.50 Second Genesis (503)788-1031

**Feb 27: VA, Richmond.** Jubilee Comic Book Con, Holiday Inn, (Fanny's) 6531 W. Broad St, 10-4 Jubilee Enterprises (301)292-4587

## MARCH

**Mar 1: NJ, Montvale.** Montvale Collectible Card and Comic Show Montvale Ramada Inn, 100 Chestnut Ridge Rd. (35 tables) 5-10 A:$2 Robert Contino (201)342-8980

**Mar 2: CA, Riverside.** The Main Event. 12321 Sampson Ave., Unit R. (40 tables) 5-10 A:Free Don Hughes (909)780-4555.

**Mar 2: CA, Walnut.** Baseball Cards, Comics, McDonald's & Racing Collectibles Frank and Son Warehouse, (150 tables) 19465 East Walnut Dr N. 5-9:30 A:Free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# "COMIC CALL"

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# THE ART OF BLACK & WHITE

*conducted by Buddy Scalera*

*Art Thibert is best known for his early inking chores at DC and Marvel with such popular characters as Superman and the X Men. He has now found himself a home at Extreme Studios, where he is about to release his first creator-owned project,* Black & White *In this interview, Thibert spoke to* CVM *about his past work, his artistic influences, and the reasons behind the making of* Black & White

**CVM:** Could you give us a brief rundown of the highlights in your career in comics?

**Thibert.** I started about seven years ago, [and] pretty much started pencilling and inking about the same time. I did some ink work for Marvel and some pencil work for DC, most notably, *Warlord* and *Time Masters*. Then I started to get ink assignments, actually it was finishes, over Dan Jurgens' pencils on *Adventures of Superman*. That's when I started to do monthly work. Then I went over to the "X" office and started working on various titles - *X-Factor*, *Uncanny X-Men* and *X Men*. You name it, I did it.

**CVM:** Do you have a preference for a particular company, or is there an artist you feel most comfortable working with?

**Thibert:** Actually, I like individuals that I work with more so than companies. I don't look at it as a "company" as much as just a particular editor or a particular talent that I'm working with. I really liked working in the "X" office with Jim Lee, Whilce [Portacio], and Rob Liefeld. I also enjoyed working on Superman with Dan Jurgens, and I really liked Mike Carlin as an editor.

**CVM:** What will you look back on as your really big break?

**Thibert:** Good question. It would probably have to be when Jim Lee gave me a call to ink a couple of fill-in issues to get ahead of his schedule on *Uncanny X-Men*. I think they were part of the "Extinction Agenda." I did two issues of that, and then one thing led to another, and I started inking Whilce Portacio on various titles.

**CVM:** Now one thing has led to another with this latest creator-owned project. Tell us about the title that you are currently working on.

**Thibert:** It's called *Black & White*. The tag line, "In a world where law and order sometimes blur to gray, justice can only be black and white," pretty much sums up what the title is all about. It's about two characters which, basically in comic lingo and TV lingo, would be like Green Hornet meets *Moonlighting* - you know the love-hate between Mattie and Dave, with a little bit of the eccentric villains of Batman - it has got a lot of different elements like that in it. Throw in some James Bond for the spy and intrigue angles, and you have *Black and White*.

**CVM.** It sounds like an action-packed book with some sci-fi thrown in. Do you have any mystery in there? What's the feel of the book?

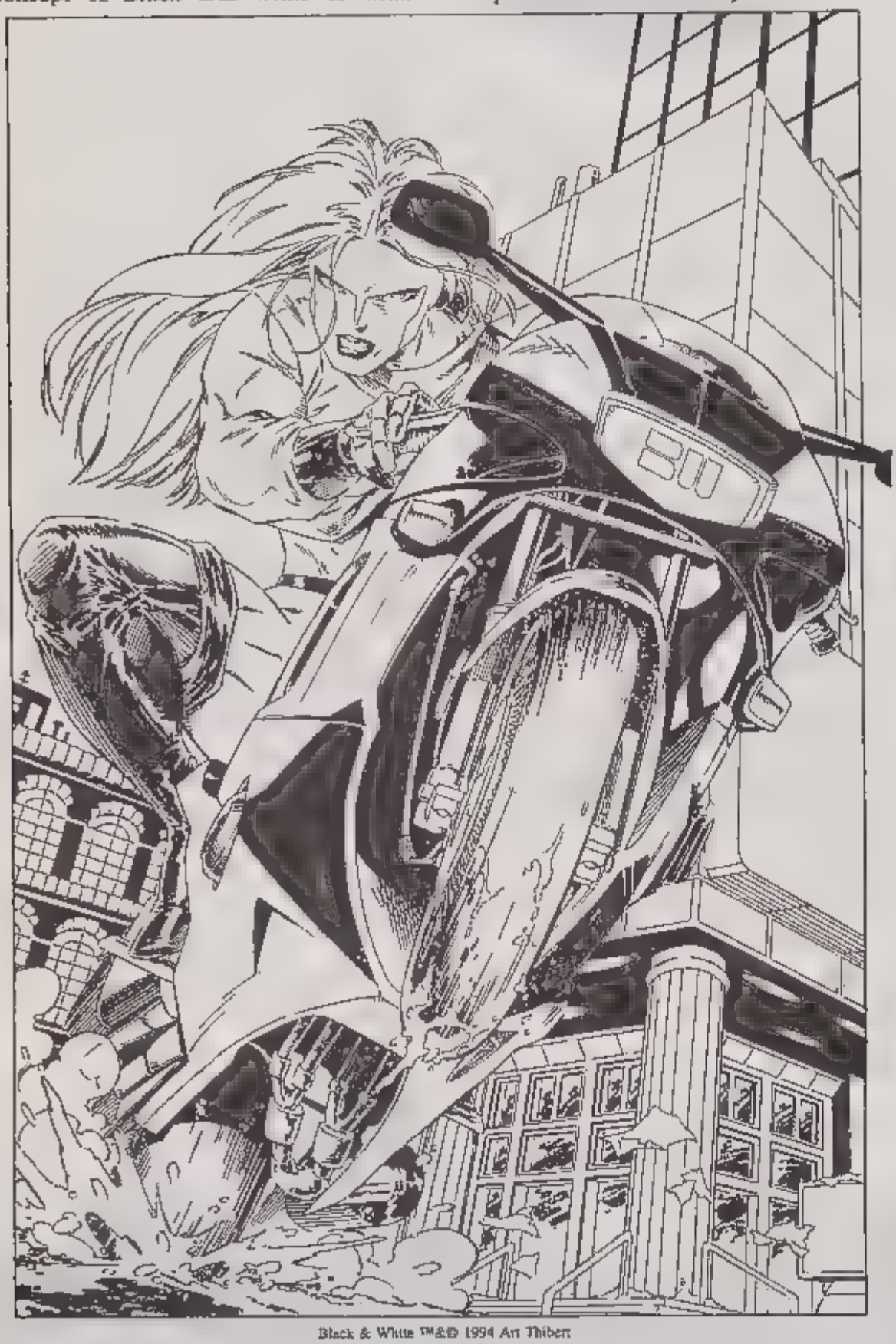
**Thibert:** *Black and White* is a realistic

WHATEVER YOUR SCHEME IS, I WANT NO PART OF IT
STAY CLEAR OF ME OR I'LL BREAK MORE THAN YOUR NOSE!
YOU FOOL-- LOOK AT ME. YOU BROKE MY NOSE!
OUR SUPERIORS WILL HEAR ABOUT THIS. THEY WILL BE EXPECTING...
Black & White ™&© 1994 Art Thibert

adventure, like Shadowhawk, Batman, and Green Hornet. The vigilante types who see a crime that needs to be avenged or a need in the public that isn't being met, go out and basically try to right the wrongs and do what they can to make this world a better place.

**CVM:** A lot of writers and creators say that their characters are extensions of their own personality. Are the characters in *Black and White* that way with you?

**Thibert:** Well, I can only speak for myself. Pamela Thibert, my wife, is co-writing and creating with me. For me, it does mean a lot, because the whole concept of *Black and White* is what we've seen in todays headlines; interwoven with todays society, where there is no truly good and bad. Look at our politicians. Was Reagan really good? Was Reagan bad? Did he have anything to do with the Iran-Contra scandal? Then you have the judicial system, which everybody, I think, is pretty fed up with. Who does it really represent? The people who were wronged, or the people who did the wrongdoing? So, *Black and White* is about two characters who really believe in the Black and White. They have a good and evil kind of outlook on life. They try to keep it in those simplistic terms. The story means a lot to me because I see things in society that upset me a little. So we created these characters to try to vent some of that out in a creative way.



Black & White ™&© 1994 Art Thibert

**CVM**: Who is your target audience, and do you think that they will appreciate a sophisticated type of analysis of our society?

**Thibert:** I can only hope that people will like it. It's not going to be a high and mighty preachy kind of society outlook. It is going to be fun, action-adventure, but the overall basic concept would be what we have just talked about. For the most part its going to be fun, action-oriented, intrigue - all the good stuff people buy comics for

**CVM:** Timothy Leary is famous for saying, "Think for yourself and question authority." Do you subscribe to that line of thinking, or is that something you go against? How do you react to that?

**Thibert**: Yeah, I definitely think that we all should do what is right for ourselves within the boundaries of the law, without anybody getting hurt. But you have to make your own judgment calls and what works for some people might not work for others. So, yeah, I believe that you should think for yourself.

**CVM:** With your comic, you told us that there are things that are going to draw an audience that enjoys the action adventure. What's going to make *Black and White* stand out from the rest of the crowd?

**Thibert**: Cool art. [*laughter*] Awesome writing. Just big, fun adventure. I think some things are lacking in certain ways in comics and I hope that we can fill the void where we can get a good mesh of exciting stories with some really good action.

**CVM:** That's a common complaint, that there is a void in comic books. Some would say that there is a lack of integrity because some people are out just for a buck. If you were giving a speech to a group of creators, writers and artists, what would you say to them about the state of comic books today?

**Thibert:** Aw, jeez.

**CVM:** We're giving you the hard questions, you know.

**Thibert:** Yeah, yeah, thanks. [*laughter*]

**CVM**: Well we figure since we are the first guys to really get to you...

**Thibert:** And you're getting to me good! I don't really know. As to what

I'm doing right now, I find the industry to be very, very interesting. I think there are very cool things being done right now. The only thing that I find lacking is that as far as variety, I like the old - not that I'm a very old timer - western, war, and sci-fi comics. I kind of miss some of the variety of the comics. I don't really have a hard time, if what you were hunting to was just like the pin-up stuff and how people say there's a lack of storytelling in today's comics. Is that what you were kind of . . .?

**CVM:** Well, yeah, that's what we were trying to ascertain.

**Thibert:** A little bit, but it doesn't really bug me. I guess the way I relate it to myself is that I want to have the big panels because I like the splash pages. What we're trying to do is mesh the two, where you have the big panels and that in-your-face stuff. And, at the same time, we want there to be a storyline that will take the reader on a roller coaster ride throughout the comic.

**CVM** You're moving from inker to a full-blown team with your wife on this book. What are both of you doing to prepare for this new challenge?

**Thibert:** Actually, we were going to work on a *Nightwing* project with DC, so we have been gearing ourselves up for doing a project for a couple of years. Basically, *Black and White* started with a love for the art form and talking about concepts we'd like to do, and then all of a sudden, Rob Liefeld gave us a very, very good opportunity to do creator-owned books for Extreme [Studios]. Suddenly things became serious. As far as preparation is concerned, it was a desire to do the project, and then talking and brainstorming ideas. We have done research on spy organizations because the character, Black, is like James Bond [in that] he's English and works for the Queen, except he works for MI-10, which is kind of like James Bond with MI-6

**CVM:** So you co-write the book and then you do all the drawing and inking, right?

**Thibert:** Right.

**CVM:** You obviously have a lot of contacts at both Marvel and DC. Why go to an independent company with your first official creator owned book?

**Thibert:** Because Image is, as far as I'm concerned, the elite and best comic company out there. I think it's the best vehicle to take. I really like the production values and I like what Image stands for, so I think they're the best place for us to be right now

**CVM:** Is it an exciting time to be part of Image?

**Thibert:** Oh, yeah, definitely. I mean, I am having the time of my life career-wise. This is what I always wanted to do, but never really had the opportunity or the chance to do. With Rob and Image, I can actually do my own thing, wake up in the morning and draw what I want. Draw and write what I want to illustrate, you know, all that good stuff [There are] also the obvious financial perks because you create the character and you solely profit from it, a hundred percent.

**CVM:** But there's also the flip side of the increased pressure and responsibility that accompanies a creator-owned project

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*"Image is, as far as I'm concerned, the elite and best comic company out there. I think it's the best vehicle to take I really like the production values and I like what Image stands for, so I think they're the best place for us to be right now."*

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If something came out bad, the "buck" stops with you.

**Thibert:** Well, I've thought about that. Hopefully, the critics and readers will really get into it and enjoy it. I think if it is mildly successful in that [area], we can make a decent living doing it, that's really all I want to do. I want to be able to put out a monthly book and have an adventure that people will look forward to every month, even if it's a couple of hundred readers. As long as we're all happy with it, that's how I would define success: as long as I can make a comfortable living, and do what I want to do. I hope it becomes really successful, but it's not a big deal really

**CVM:** Do you work out of Extreme studios, or do you get to work out of your own home?

**Thibert:** I have an office over at Extreme and work with all the guys in the trenches there.

**CVM:** You live in Los Angeles?

**Thibert:** Yeah. I am actually in Riverside County.

**CVM:** Are you from that area?

**Thibert:** I'm not from this exact area, but I'm a native Californian.

**CVM:** Oh, so that's pretty convenient for you.

**Thibert:** Oh, yeah. It's about a twenty-minute ride on the freeway. I get in my little car and drive down there every day, put in my eight hours, and come home It's pretty cool.

**CVM:** When we spoke to your brother yesterday, he told us that your father was an artist and that he is an architect. What effect has their work had on your decision to work in comic books?

**Thibert:** I've always loved the art form since I was a little kid. I used to read comics and *Batman* was my favorite. My dad would always be doodling something, always be drawing little characters, and my mom would do art projects. My dad, for example, would do something and she would paint it. They would always do these creative projects together. So I think I was around that a lot and just really liked to draw, too, I guess. Tony [my brother] just kind of followed the whole pattern. Actually, my father's brother, whose name is also Art, draws too. So it's kind of been handed down. Tony and I are the first ones who actually broke out and started doing it professionally

**CVM:** Was your family very supportive when you decided to do this, or were they skeptical of comic books?

**Thibert:** Oooh, that one hurt. [They were] very, very skeptical. Without going into detail, it was kind of like the "get a real job syndrome." I don't think that my dad really thought that you could actually make a living doing comics. He tried to encourage me not to do it, probably because I was so young, but that only made me want to do comics more.

**CVM:** What sort of formal art training, if any, do you have?

**Thibert:** I am mostly self-taught. I went to a couple of community colleges, but basically, all I kept coming back to, that I felt that I could use, was life-drawing courses I went to college for about five years taking a couple of semesters here

Black & White ™&© 1994 Art Thibert

and there, almost religiously. I would take life drawing courses and then draw like crazy all the time to try to get better So, that's pretty much all of the training that I've had.

**CVM:** Was there a job or a career that you were involved in before you got into comic books?

**Thibert:** Actually, I really had high hopes to be a musician. I was playing drums in a lot of local L.A. bands, back when the L.A. scene was really hot; in the late 70s, early 80s. We did a couple of studio things and had some demos, and even did some commercials for local radio stations. We got a little bit of air play and played all the hot L.A. clubs. It just seemed that the lifestyle didn't work for me. It was a crazy life style.

**CVM:** But it must have been an interesting experience, if nothing else?

**Thibert:** Oh, it was a blast. I was pretty young when a lot of it was going on, so I had to get permission from my parents to play a lot of the clubs because of the sale of alcohol

In addition, the guys in the bands that I was playing with, were a lot older than me. They were in their twenties and I was like 16 or so. It was pretty entertaining. I mean, I definitely grew up quickly and got to see the seedier side of life early on.

**CVM:** Things have come a long way since then. You now have control over your own destiny with Black & White.

**Thibert:** Yeah, I always wanted to do creator-owned projects. Rob and I used to talk about that kind of thing in the early days even before he did *X-Men*. Rob and I have been friends for many years. We both started in comics around the same time. We always wanted to create a character, see it evolve, and then be able to create a franchise like Dave Stevens [did taking] the Rocketeer to the screen. Even then, Rob had *Youngblood* in mind as a creator-owned project. So now I have come full-circle and have finally got an opportunity to do it. Thanks, Rob! [*laughter*]

**CVM:** Who's a major influence on your art style?

**Thibert:** There's been a lot of people through my development that influenced me. But I guess [people like] Frank Miller, Klaus Janson, David Mazzucchelli, and Alan Moore were influential. I got into their work hard core and then backed off it for a while. Then I rediscovered it a couple of months ago

So, you're definitely going to see their influence in *Black and White*. Once again, it's kind of come full circle for me. The fan in me is coming out and saying, "Wow, this stuff is cool. I want to do this stuff now."

**CVM:** What does it feel like to meet these guys on their level?

**Thibert:** It's been a blast. It still kind of freaks me out sometimes when I go to a show and people know who I am and they just talk to me like a normal person. It's like, "Wow, this is cool. I can't believe it."

It still kind of freaks me out a little bit because I don't think of myself in those terms at all, you know?

**CVM:** So, you're still basically a fan?

**Thibert:** Yeah, I guess in a way. I'm probably more of a fan now than I ever was, because I think before, I was more the cynic, just doing it to make a living. But now, it's like I'm rediscovering what comics were all about - why I got into it, and why I thought it was so cool as a kid.

# COMICS VALUES MONTHLY

BLACK AND WHITE © 1994, ART THIBERT

- CVM FOCUSES ON ART THIBERT'S NEW COMIC FOR IMAGE ENTITLED BLACK AND WHITE
- AXIS COMICS, THE NEW COMPANY THAT PUBLISHES TRIBE BY TODD JOHNSON AND LARRY STROHMAN IS ALSO FEATURED
- THE IMPACT OF WOMEN IN THE COMIC BOOK INDUSTRY IS EXPLORED
- "WRITER'S BLOCK" BY JOHN OSTRANDER
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# Stephen Platt: A Prophet(able) Adventure

*conducted by Neil Hansen*

*From seemingly out of nowhere, Stephen Platt has turned from new Marvel artist to comic superstar in just a few short months. On the basis of his work on* Moon Knight *#55, Marvel was slating Platt to take over the art chores on* Cable. *However, Platt's career took a surprise turn when he moved to Image to take over as artist on Rob Liefeld's* Prophet. *In this interview, Platt explained why he made the switch from Marvel to Image, and revealed his future plans in comics.*

**CVM:** The name Stephen Platt was unknown in the comics industry until a few months ago. For the benefit of our readers, can you tell me a little about your background.

**Platt:** I'm 23; I was born in Manchester, England, and moved to Canada when I was seven. Always been drawing, always been drawing superheroes; just never really investigated that avenue until recently. I went to the Ontario School of Art for about two and a half years. Then I basically withdrew myself (in more ways than one) halfway through the semester, because I knew at that point that comic books were where I was going to be for a long time. It was pointless for me, going to school.

If I'm absolutely certain I'm going to make a change, then I make a change immediately. That's what I did, and my school was really understanding about it. I started working for Marvel right away.

**CVM:** What gave you the impetus to decide that comic books were what you wanted to do?

**Platt:** I've always been thinking and drawing my own characters, like every other kid that ever wanted to get into comics. Absolutely every kid that I ever talked to was always getting ideas. "They should do this to Wolverine. They should do that with Spider-Man." I was the exact same kid. I was no different, and I was drawing them all the time. Luckily for me, I had people that encouraged me to draw them; they were starting to look better than the other kids drawings. That's when I knew that maybe this was a particular avenue I could explore. I never acted upon it until I got into college, where I realized that maybe I didn't like advertising and didn't like graphic design all that much.

Illustration was my thing, but it's not as much fun as drawing comics which I was always doing, but never acted upon it as a career move. To me, I was just doing what came naturally, and denying that I should do this for a living. Finally, I decided, "Oh, [expletive deleted]! I might as well try." I don't ever want to be asking myself, "What would have happened if...?" That would have been awful. I didn't want to have my life like that.

*"I went to the Ontario School of Art for about two and a half years. Then I basically withdrew myself (in more ways than one) halfway through the semester, because I knew at that point that comic books were where I was going to be for a long time. It was pointless for me, going to school," Stephen Platt said.*

In February [1993], halfway through my third year of college, I went on a trip to New York where I met a guy in a bank, a Marvel employee named "Whitey" whose real name is Jesus Gonzalez. I noticed that he had a Marvel jacket on so I asked, "Where can I get a jacket like that?" He said, "Well, I work there." That was it. I happened to have my work on me so I pulled it out. I wouldn't let him leave until he talked to me. He was really terrific about the whole thing. I said, "Can you take a look at this?" He said, "Yeah, sure. Pull it out." He saw the work and said, "Two o'clock; I want you to come by [Marvel] Use my name. I'll get you in there." The rest is history. I talked to a couple of editors, and then Terry Kavanagh [writer of *Moon Knight*] called me with a real assignment.

**CVM:** You started on the *Moon Knight* material, correct?

**Platt:** I started on a *Marvel Comics Presents* story. It was a 32-pager. I only got through the first eight pages because I was doing schoolwork. I had exams and it was just too hard to do both. I continued on the *Marvel Comics Presents* story when school finished. Then the editor of *Moon Knight*, Sarah Mossa, called me and asked me to do that title. I was going to take anything; I didn't care what it was. It could have been the lowest [selling] book at Marvel, I didn't care. I just thought, whatever they give me, I'm gonna make it bitchin', and try to put my identity out there. That is the key thing, to create a visual identity for yourself. The reaction to the work was really good. I just felt really fortunate the fans dug it; I dug what I was doing. It's that type of chemistry, and I guess that just makes for a successful formula.

**CVM:** There have been comparisons made between your work and Todd McFarlane's...

**Platt:** Todd and I have talked about it, and he doesn't see it. I would be lying if I didn't say that he was a major influence in my work. In fact, one of his books was one of the reasons that really pushed me towards that area of illustration. It was issue #328 of *Amazing Spider-Man* where Spider-Man had these Captain Universe powers. When I saw it, I said, "This guy is having a ball." I just wanted to have a ball, too.

Then I came across *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*. For me – I read a lot of Batman books – that was the definitive Batman book. There's a lot of Frank Miller in my work, in the way that it's gritty, although my characters don't look like Frank's. Well, some of them do, and some of them don't - *Sin City*ish, *Dark Knight*ish - everyone's sort of massive. There's a bigness about it.

I have been reading *Heavy Metal* since I was ten, much to the behest of my mother. There's so many European influences. Vitanno Libertore is one of my favorite artists of all time. *Ranxerox* is his most famous work. He's done a lot of really perverse, completely pagan stuff, but for me, I just loved his technique. I loved the way his characters looked. I loved the rhythm and pace of the stuff. He's one of those people that's completely unafraid, and completely uninhibited. He had no convictions at all that anything he was doing was wrong, or maybe he knew and that was why he was doing it. At 10 years old, you read *Ranxerox* and you don't know what half of the stuff means. It just looks cool. Then of course, you get educated later on as to what life is about, and you realize how sick it is. It's a shame he died.

When I was a kid, no one knew who Michael Kaluta was. I knew right away when I saw him in *Heavy Metal*. I said this guy is awesome. Most of the kids were into Mike Grell and the Warlord thing he was doing, which I liked, too.

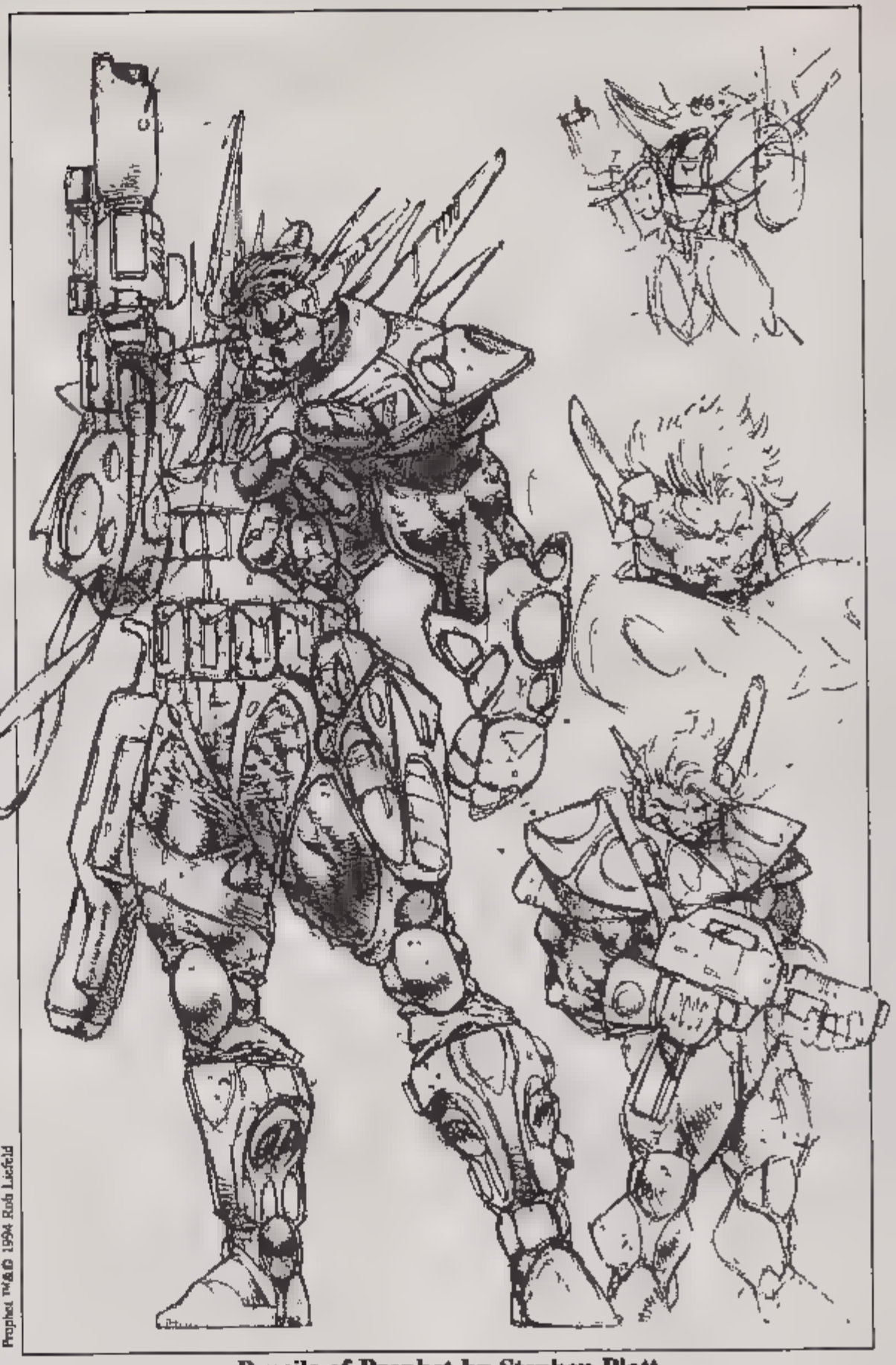
George Perez was the first superstar for me. I still see some of him in my work. A lot of people don't; that's fine. I know what's an inspiration to me. I liked George, and I liked his dedication to his craft more than anything else because it was so obvious.

**CVM:** Now you were slated to do *Cable*

**Platt:** ...which I was totally looking forward to doing...

**CVM:** ...but that fell through because you went to Image with *Prophet*. Can you tell us the story behind that?

**Platt:** Rob [Liefeld] is a very aggressive person. When he came after me it's not like he needed to do a lot of convincing, because I knew the Image schpiel. I know a couple of guys who work for Image. I knew what the schpiel was going to be. Every artist in the industry knows what these guys say to you to get you to come aboard. It's no secret. It's also no secret that Marvel's been losing people for a long time.




**Pencils of Prophet by Stephen Platt**

At my age right now, Image is a good place to be because they have a very young, fresh perspective in many ways. Rob is giving me a lot of creative freedom. I'm so excited about this book. It's overwhelming. Some of the things we're going to be doing are going to be hardcore. Other times we're going to investigate the psyche of the character, which I think is not first priority at Image, but it is with me because I enjoy that kind of writing. I think if people know a character, they start to create empathy and sympathy for that character. If it's just some guy in armor who goes ballistic every time he's in a situation, who really doesn't think at all, who is just giving those one-liners every time

he's blowing somebody away, people don't care. You can't get attached to that type of character. I only create something that's entertaining, and involves you, too. With that you're not just watching it, you're involved with it.

**CVM:** Are you going to be writing *Prophet*?

**Platt:** I'm co-plotting it. Rob will be handling the writing chores. We're going to re-outfit Prophet. We're going to shock the hell out of people with the character. Prophet is a religious zealot. Religious zealots can be really dangerous people because they're blinded by their faith. That's an explosive ideology, and also extremely confrontational. It can also be a dichotomous existence when you're an unforgiving zealot and yet, as a person of God, you're belief is based on forgiveness.

**CVM:** You're going to be doing a lot of internal conflicts with the character?

**Platt:** Yeah. One of the things we're going to be developing, is Prophets association with the status chamber. Prophet was put in a status chamber. As far as the readers know right now, he never left that status chamber from the day he was put away during World War II, to his awakening in 1993. We start to discover that that's not the only time that Prophet has been exhumed from his chamber. He's been traded around like a weapon of war to the highest bidder. Governments have bought Prophet and used him in their operations until he was no longer useful, or until the satellite linked up with him again and Prophet became conscious of what he was doing and realized that what he was doing was immoral

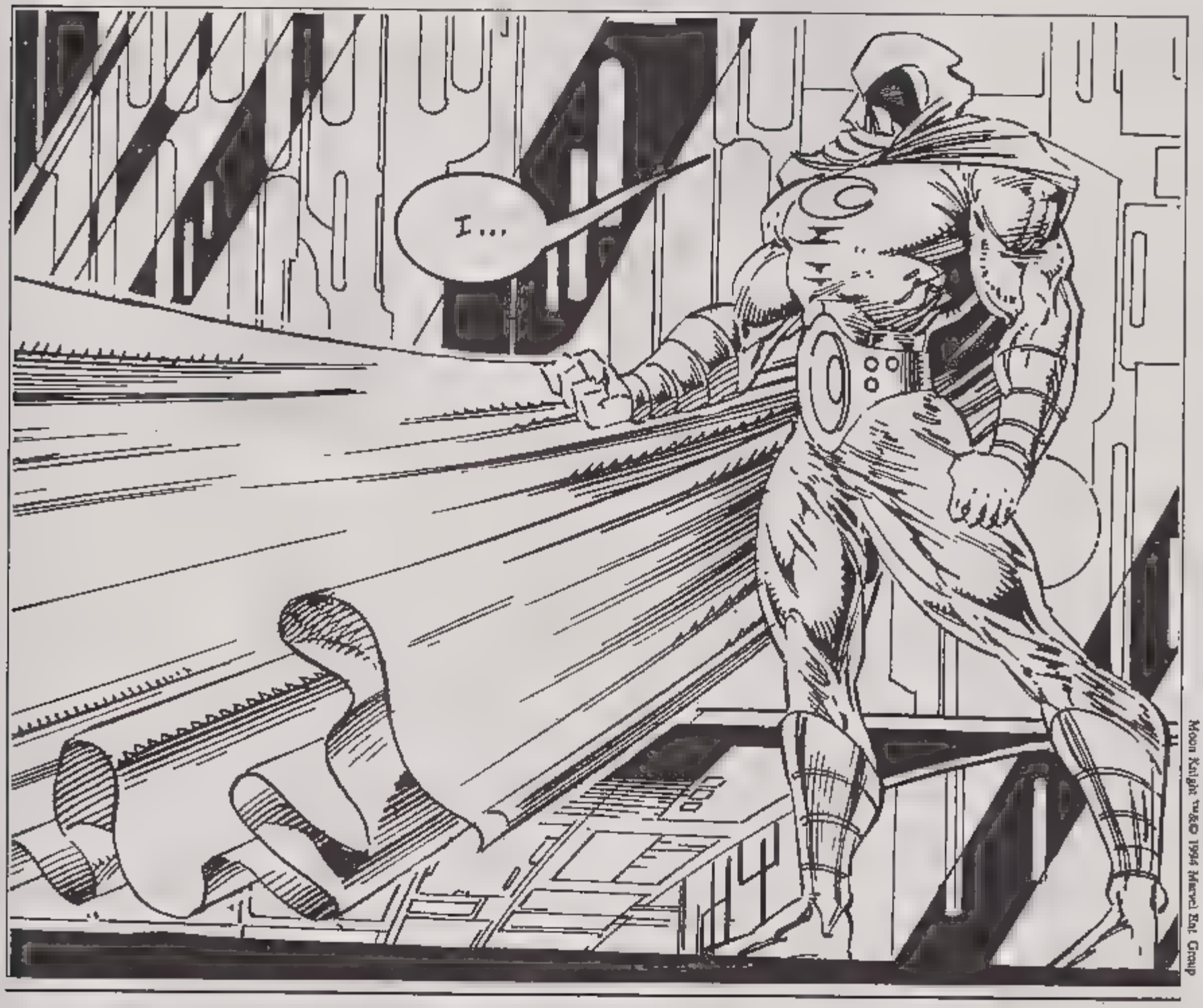
We will introduce other characters that were summoned to shut Prophet down. The CIA uses Prophet for this expedition, and all of a sudden, President Lyndon B. Johnson gets a 6.30 a.m. call saying, "We have problems with the Prophet project. He's not doing what we're telling him to do." The President puts the phone down, saying, "Okay, shut him down." We have to introduce a character that is capable of doing just that.

**CVM:** Are you going to be furthering the Prophet supporting cast as well?

**Platt:** Kirby will be consistent; Kirby is a hardcore atheist. Prophet is extremely religious, so we're going to be having a lot of discussions of atheism versus religion.

**CVM:** That's something you don't regularly see in a comic book...

**Platt:** No, but if we're doing it in a context that's exciting, it can co-exist peacefully in a storyline. Obviously,




Moon Knight ™&© 1994 Marvel Ent Group

there are scenes that are violent or where the situation goes totally berserk, and that's tuned in to my artwork. A lot of my work is like that

Prophet also starts having these flashbacks. He starts having flashbacks of Vietnam, and he doesn't know why Eventually, he comes to the conclusion that he was in Vietnam, but he has suppressed the experience. It's almost like post traumatic stress disorder where they go through the trauma after they've come back. The brain shuts down, unable to deal with the experience, and just stores the information. I think Prophet suffering from post–traumatic stress disorder is such an interesting thing to do because a lot of soldiers that have seen combat suffer from that.

**CVM:** So you're throwing in a sense of real life.

**Platt:** Real life with absolutely fantastic storylines Prophet is going to be dealing with a lot of different situations He's going to be in outer space, he's going to be going all over the place. We have a story arc where Prophet is going to be searching for the Holy Grail. As a religious person, he feels that yearning within him. He acquires Excalibur during that time, and Excalibur becomes the sword of Prophet.

**CVM:** You're going to be including a lot of legend as well?

**Platt:** Yes, Arthurian legend is going to play a large part in it; Prophet may acquire the Grail

**CVM:** Have you done a lot of research on this material?

**Platt:** I'm a Vietnam freak. I'm very much into that war. I'm also into armaments. I read a lot about the Gulf War. I read a lot about campaigns. I'm very much into covert operations, and teams that run covert operations like Navy team Seal Six, the S.A.S, the Mossad of Israel, all of these things.

If a SWAT team runs a mission, it's in the paper the next day. If the S.A.S. runs a mission, executes it, and it's in the paper the next day, the mission's considered a complete failure. That's the mentality that intrigues me. There's [expletive deleted] going on out there that we have no idea about. Millions of dollars of our tax money goes into operations, that if we had access to the dossiers, we would throw up at the absolute unethical agenda of those missions. If we're not investigating where the money is going, then we're responsible for that agenda because we didn't care enough to find out. I want to bring that element into *Prophet*.

I'm not going to indict any political figures, but I will indict the ideas and the idioms of government. To me, any comic book that breeds discussion is a good one. With *Prophet*, I'm just showing the world that we have created, and what happens after that is characteristic of what happens in that world. Prophet has to come to terms with acts he's going to do - horrible, atrocious acts.

Have you heard of the Phoenix Project?

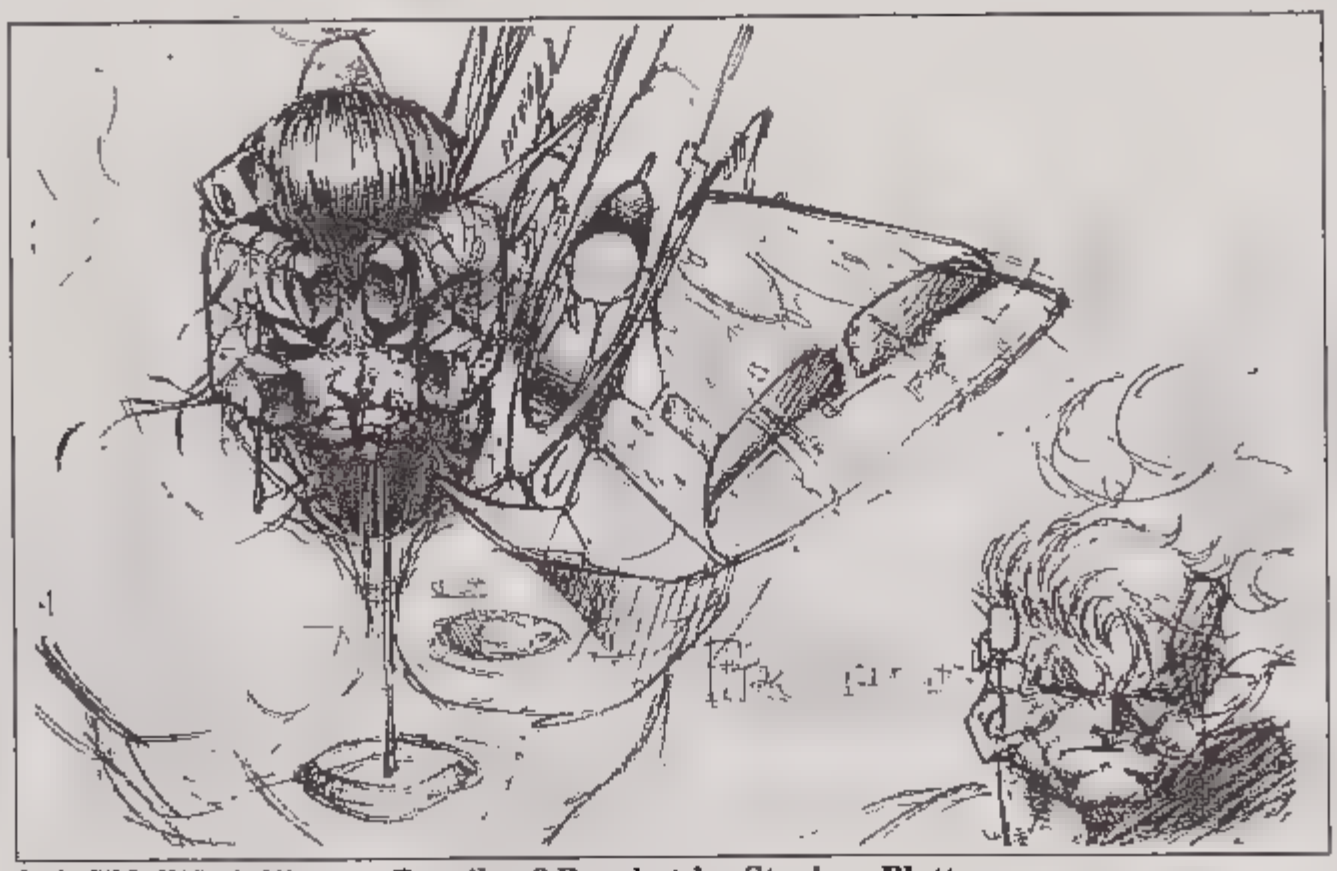
**CVM:** No, I haven't.

**Platt:** It was a CIA interrogation program that existed in Vietnam towards the end of the war. The director of the CIA at that time denied all the things that the people who were running the program said had happened. Guys running the Phoenix program had Viet Cong spies, Communist spies, and were "extracting" information from them. They had a prison called Devil's Island, on Cansun. They had provincial interrogation centers, nicknamed "picks". The information they were getting was so bad that they ended up interrogating all these innocent people. By the time they let these people go, they had already created their enemy. They made so many Vietnamese hate Americans that they recruited half the enemy for the Viet Cong just simply by the things they were doing.

That's what Devil's Island was all about, all kinds of activities that the papers never heard about because of the saw that were extreme censorship.

I want to introduce that side into the title. Prophet was working for these people. He starts having flashbacks of Vietnam and all these things he's done. They horrify him, he's running from it. Kirby is the guy that's trying to run him through it.

Kirby and Prophet become political fugitives from the U.S. Army because at one point, they agree to work for the U.S. government but in issue #4, they escape because Prophet goes on a berserker mode. [The Government] lied to them and told them all these things just to get them working. There's a



Prophet ™&© 1994 Rob Liefeld

**Pencils of Prophet by Stephen Platt**

virtual reality program that they hook Prophet up to, and that's when he starts having all these vicious flashbacks. The analysts and researchers go, "This isn't in the program." Some of the things are going on only in Prophet's memory. Some of the things the satellite has, but doesn't remember other things [Prophet] is trying to piece his life back together. Everybody has a piece of the puzzle, and he's got to wrestle it from them.

**CVM:** Explain your creative process towards your work.

**Platt:** I see it as a motion picture; I also have to know it's a comic book, you can't draw the thing as a film. I have pictures in my mind of how it's going to look before I draw it, but you can't draw the whole thing as a film because there aren't enough panels. I try and give dramatic angles. For me, I think what people like is that there is a lot to look at. There's a lot to feast on, visual "food". People like the grit; people like the detail. I get fans who say they like all different things, for all sorts of different reasons. If there is a responsive chord that I'm hitting, then I think it's great. I'm having a good time, and I hope it shows.

**CVM:** What's more important to you in terms of a comic book, the story or the art? Or is it about equal?

**Platt:** That's a terrible question because I don't want to piss off any writers, but if the artwork is exceptionally visual, sequentially, you can almost read it without words. For me as an artist, somebody who has a strong affinity for visual mediums, when you ultimately get down to it, it's got to be the art. We're not writing a novel without words, we're writing a picture book that has words in it, and I think it goes in that order. A writer may tell you that writing is the most important thing. It inspires great art in a lot of ways. One inspires the other; it's a reciprocal relationship. If you get a great plot and you're really excited about it, you create great visuals. Then the writer is going to get excited about it, and you're going to have a good book. I see it as a cohesive discipline.

**CVM:** Most of the other people at Image have written and drawn their own material. Do you think that will happen to you down the road?

**Platt:** Absolutely. I have characters I want to introduce, and I have storylines I want to introduce. I have an agenda. People have this attitude, and I find this a lot, that superhero comic books are no longer worthy. They're very much into the *Sandman* school and the Neil Gaiman school of writing. That's valid, because comic books have succumbed to this generic ideology of what hero books should be, and they have become boring in a lot of ways. I subscribe to that somewhat, but to me, it's so simple that people miss it: there is no such thing as a bad character. In the end, these are just people that wear costumes. What we bring to them is basically what they are. There's no such thing as a bad character, there's just bad writers and bad artists. That is the bottom line.

**CVM:** What is your impression of the comic book market these days?

**Platt:** I'm not an expert on the comic book market. I have to say that right now, I just love drawing comics. All I know is what I'm doing, and if the fans like it, that makes me very happy. What I've heard is that sales are dropping all over the place...

**CVM:** What I've heard is that it's a more level playing field now

**Platt:** There's so much to choose from now. I'm not going to say that it's the most important thing to me because if I create a book that I could be proud of...

**CVM:** Something to be read as opposed to something polybagged with a trading card...

**Platt:** Absolutely! If it's [expletive deleted], you put in a polybag and trading card, it's still going to be [expletive deleted] when you open it up. You can giftwrap whatever you want, it's what's in the box that you're getting.

If the comic market shrinks, I think people are going to be more discerning buyers. I think people will start staying away from titles that don't have it for them anymore. People will start collecting comics to get what they like, and not necessarily what they feel will go up in value. When *Moon Knight* #55 came out, people bought it because they liked the cover, and they thought it was a neat book. They felt the character had been revamped. No one bought it as a speculator. Now, it's being bought as a speculation book. It was a big surprise. Either, you were in the store that day when it came in or you weren't. Then, when the book shot up in value, all the speculators jumped out of the woodwork and said [Platt] is going to be the next guy or whatever. I get that every day. I'm not even thinking in those terms. I'm just thinking, right now, I have to finish *Moon Knight* #60. After that, I'm going to do *Prophet*.

**CVM:** Where do you see yourself in the future?

**Platt:** I want to create stories that spark discussion. I don't have that luxury right now at Marvel, I have nothing to do with the plot. That's Terry Kavanagh's arena. When I came to Image, one of the biggest draws was that I was going to say what happened to Prophet. We don't have to go through a board of directors. We don't have to go through editors who say, "No, that's not in my continuity."

I have a lot of favorite guys in comics. Todd McFarlane was one of the guys that made me see you could have a good time doing this. Visually, he's stunning. He's so appealing to me, always will be. His work has so much visual energy.

Some guys have a feeling for aesthetics, what lines do to people, and the way things are drawn. There are a lot of guys who are pedestrian artists, who stay in the safe area. Todd progressed. I saw his earlier stuff, and I didn't even know it was him. I see where he is now, and I want to be like that. I want to create the definitive Stephen Platt. I want people to say, "Wow! That guy Platt has really changed from his *Moon Knight* stuff."

Five years from now or ten years from now, I want to be drawing comics. I want to create a character that won't die once you go.

I just got in this business. I literally came out a couple of months ago. That's why I feel all this is so bizarre. I feel like I jumped into comics head first, and when I thought I was heading down, I caught this jet stream that was going straight up on a vertical. It's so weird the way things happen.

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# WHAT HE'S BLOCK

*by Marv Wolfman*

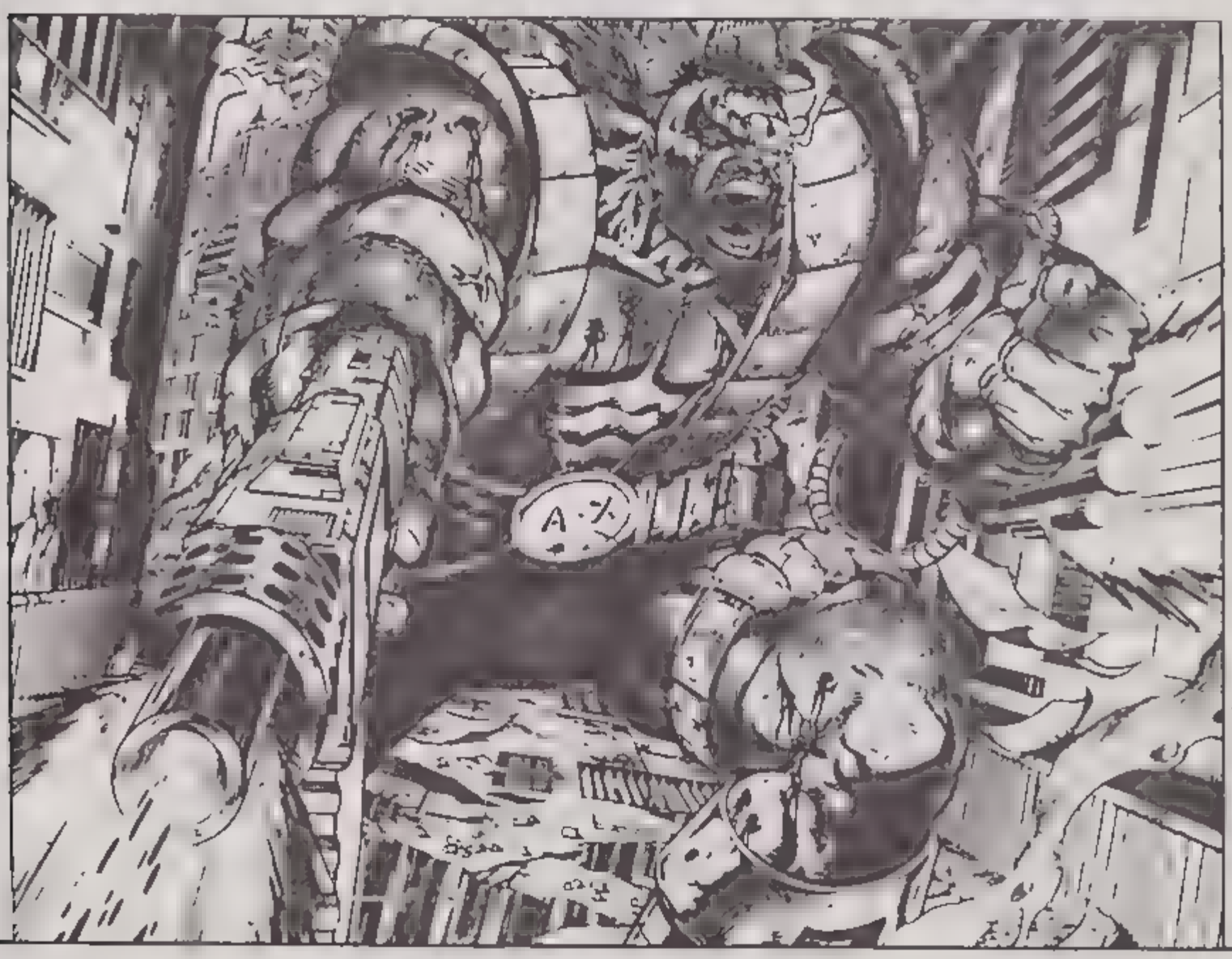
**Bring on the Villains!**

The cliche goes, heroes are only as good as their villains. I would like to amend the cliche a bit and say that heroes are as good as their opposition, not their villains. A good story doesn't need a villain, but it does need opposition, or in the word of any basic writing class, conflict.

Conflict can come from anywhere. It can come from the outside in the form of a super-villain, of course. A big bruiser with giant fists and any standard issue super-power,provides a super-hero with someone to punch in the face. These stories are often more difficult to write than most would assume, because to write it well you should think of original and exciting action. If you are going to do plots that mostly consist of action, it had better be great action, something that can't be found in a Jim Cameron or John Woo film. These stories, despite the simplicity of their plots, are also usually well-received, a fact that still confuses me to this date. Nevertheless, they do work, and no matter how many critics put them down, a great number of readers enjoy them. And frankly, that's okay. I often think critics want all comics written to their level,forgetting what they enjoyed reading when they first got into comics. Note that all super-hero comics feature the all-fight plots. Let me repeat that--no matter how good or how bad the comic may be, all super-hero comics use this device to one degree or another. It doesn't matter if the creator who uses this is working for a company who owns the characters or for themselves, the all-battle issue is a standard that readers still enjoy after all these years. Also, please note that I am not talking about the quality of the story, just the device.

That said, straight on fight stories usually do not have a lot of depth and are usually little more than *bigdumbfun* to read. The villains in these stories are usually not after anything more than fighting with the hero, and exist only to stop the hero from succeeding. Again, *bigdumbfun* is fine, but the conflict is all surface.

More often, villains are after something that could hurt someone else: A robbery. A kidnapping. Taking over the world. Eating the world. Etc. This




Man Called A•X ™ & © 1994, Marv Wolfman and Shawn McManus

kind of story is the staple of super-hero comics. The villain is definitely doing something bad for personal gain and the hero is trying to stop them in the name of humanity. The hero is not personally involved with the problem, so he is selflessly lending a super-powered hand simply because it is the right thing to do. In these kinds of stories, the hero represents "The Best In Us." We would all like to believe we would help others in need, or stop someone from doing wrong or at least protect others.

These stories are definitely a level up from the pure fight story because these stories have a moral imperative. A story that forces someone to act morally means a character is acting from a need, rather than an instinct. Once you have a need you are beginning to flesh out your characters.

The villains should have needs in these stories, too. Needs beyond wanting to steal money or kidnapping the Governor. If the villain is to be interesting, he has to be more than a cipher. He should not be someone who acts instinctively and goes through his paces without rhyme or reason. Think of the villain as a human being who, though he may be wrong, is still a human being with likes, dislikes, desires, needs and reasons. In short, the villain should be as interesting as the character he opposes.

The most interesting stories for me come from someone who wants something that conflicts with whatever the hero wants. That someone may or may not be 'evil.' He and the hero simply want the same thing, but they approach the accessing of that goal in ways that define one as the protagonist and the other as the antagonist. In these stories you do not write absolutes. That is, you don't have one guy all good and the other bad. This forces you to analyze the characters from the inside rather than the surface. A story where both characters are after the same goal forces one to truly think about their characters and what motivates them.

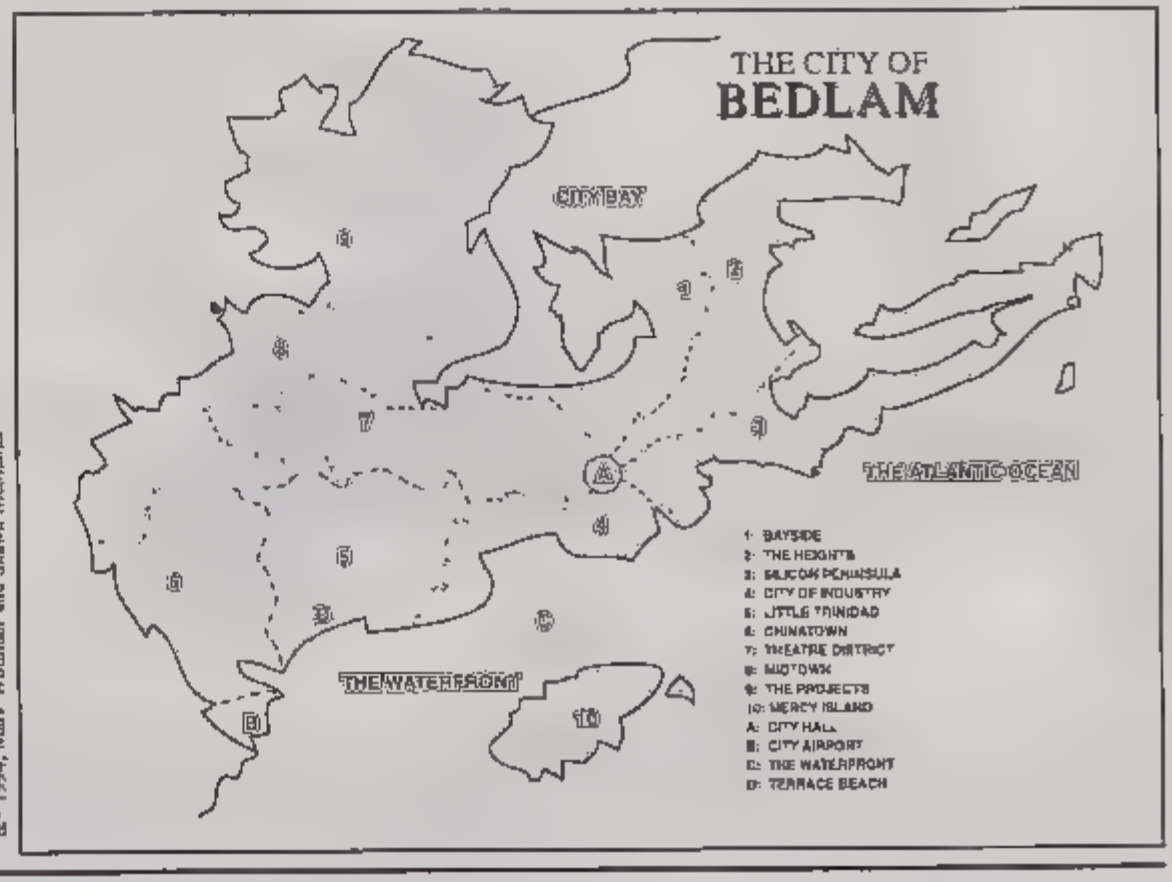
Political stories live off this kind of hero/villain structure. Two countries (represented by two people) are after something because it is important to their way of being. To give a real-life example, let's use Israel and Palestine. The Palestinians want a homeland where they can live in peace. The Israelis are afraid of terrorism and violence by the Palestinians. Neither side is wrong for having these desires, but those needs conflict with each other. When you can apply this to a story, you are forced to create full characters who have strong beliefs that can be stated and acted on. It forces the writer to think about both sides of the story and to make both sides give logical reasons why they are correct.

A number of years ago, in *The New Titans*, I decided to indicate that the then Kid Flash was a conservative working alongside the other more Liberal Titans. My politics tended toward the rest of the Titans, but when I wrote Kid Flash I had to make sure when he talked about his beliefs, they were completely honest to him. I couldn't make fun of things he said or he would not be true to himself. In writing a character like that, the writer is forced to acknowledge other people's beliefs and to deal with them honestly

*"The villain is definitely doing something bad for personal gain and the hero is trying to stop them in the name of humanity. The hero is not personally involved with the problem, so he is selflessly lending a super-powered hand simply because it is the right thing to do."*

To put it another way, in one of the pop-psyche courses I took at one time or another, there was an exercise where you are matched up with someone your size and weight and are told to get into hand wrestling position. You are supposed to force your opponents hand down as hard as you can and scream, "I'm right!" Then the other person is supposed to force your hand down and scream that they are right. You are then supposed to go back and forth. After one or two smashing of hands and shouting of slogans, I looked at my 'opponent' and said what we were doing was ridiculous, and stopped. We were shouting and physically fighting over nothing. Others in the class continued until the instructor stopped everyone. Then it was revealed that our stopping was the right thing to do. We were substituting the words "I'm right!" for specific beliefs, but they were ideas we were supposed to believe in. So how could I be right if the other person was also right, even if we disagreed? The answer is both people can be right even if they are poles apart. If you can create an interesting antagonist using this idea, then you are going to create a complex story

Last month I discussed a new comic I co-created with Shawn McManus for Bravura entitled **The Man Called A•X.** This is a fast-paced, action-oriented adventure comic, where the plot and character and action all come together, so action propels plot and character, character moves the plot and action, and the plot also comes out of both. A•X takes place in the City of Bedlam. Bedlam was ruled by twelve mob families, but by the time the series begins only ten families remain. This meant we had to create ten different and, one hopes, interesting criminal



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mobs. That means ten different leaders Ten different kinds of mobs. Ten different reasons for them to be criminals. And finally, ten different locations all in the same city.

The world the story takes place in establishes the realities of the story. Batman would not work as well if he worked out of Smallville. Gotham sets up a backdrop for Batman that makes everything in the series make sense. I knew using a real city would not work for A•X. In my mind, the City was one of the villains, perhaps the ultimate villain. Therefore, the first decision I made was not to create the gangs, for that could come later, but to create the City Of Bedlam. For A•X to work, Bedlam had to be as real and tangible as anything else in the series. Everything in the series happens because of the situations that exist in Bedlam. That makes Bedlam as responsible for each unfolding event as any other character. The following brief synopsis comes from my original prospectus on *The Man Called A•X*

*Founded by Leeland Bedlam in 1756, the city of BEDLAM was a thriving mining colony in the 1850s, played out by the '60s, a ghost town throughout the '70s, and in the '80s turned into a hole-in-the-wall hideout for every cutthroat, murderer or gang of thieves who managed to buy their way out of New York justice. The 1930s ushered in bootlegging and gambling Liquor, money and women were traded like stocks and bonds. By the mid 20th century, the founder's descendants painted the city with a fresh coat of whitewash, but the rot beneath had a way of showing through.*

*In the past, the mobs ruled Bedlam with muscle, steel and bullets. The only thing that's different today is the bullets are bigger.*

*Hell hasn't changed a helluva lot*

*THE MOBS. In 1992, twelve mobs controlled Bedlam. After three decades of mistrust and gang wars, they uneasily cut it apart like a sloppily sliced pie and divvied it up between them. For fifteen months there was peace, and the Bedlam City coffers prospered. The "Man On The Street" no longer feared to venture out after dark.*

*Occasional street festivals sprung up. It may not have been pride that gripped Bedlam, but it was an amazing*

Man Called A•X ™&© 1994, Marv Wolfman and Shawn McManus

*simulation.*

*The secret war began in April of 1994, when The Taliss Brothers and most of their gang were found murdered at their Terrace Beach resort. Andrew and Edward Taliss controlled much of Bedlam's sex and porno parlors. Their business, and a third of their territory, was taken over by Little Trinidad to the East, and the rest of their land, including the City Airport, was gobbled up by the Chinatown Tong to the west. There were now eleven families controlling Bedlam.*

*In June of 1993, circumventing the secured and guarded bridge, tram and boat connections to Mercy Island, an assassin made his way to shore, past laser security, through the Electribot guards, to the Xanadu-like mansion owned by Garrison Gage who controlled Bedlam's Power and Light. Gage was almost killed before automatic sentries incinerated the intruder.*

*Hidden cameras revealed a heavily armed, tall, powerful man with electronic glasses and metallic gloves. No one from any of the mobs admitted to having seen his face before. Police computers could find no match even when interfacing with Federal services*

*But, whoever he was, the mobs were relieved; he was dead. Two weeks later, a guard, found dying on the Alfred Gemini's Bayside Compound, insisted he saw the same man blasting his way free after assassinating Gemini and his gang*

*Gemini had controlled Bedlam's gambling operation. His territory and operations were merged with Louie O. to his East, who ran Bedlam's Sanitation Department.*

*Where there were once twelve mob families, now there were ten.*

This is just a touch of the background we gave to Bedlam; to flesh it out as more than just another City. I went further and included in the prospectus a complete map of Bedlam showing where each district was, how things connected and the general distances between major areas. This also defined where the ten gangs operated.

Much of this information may never be used in the first six-part A•X story, or even in any potential sequel. But, knowing Bedlam inside and out gives the writing a credibility that I could not have achieved by making it up on the run. When I began plotting the individual issues of A•X, I knew the City of Bedlam as well as I knew New York or Los Angeles. Bedlam became a character in the series who motivated every action our good guys and bad guys took. When you sit down to create your characters, heroes and villains, be certain you understand them and their surroundings This applies to writing adventure comics, horror comics, humor comics, and any other kind of writing you may want to do. To recap, understand your heroes. Motivate your villains as strongly as you motivate your heroes, and understand the world that surrounds them.

Finally, an addendum: There are no rules to writing good stories. You can create a completely mindless character and have them destroy without purpose and you may have created the most interesting story of the year. On the other hand, you can create a complex, fully rounded character and write a dud. If I speak in absolutes, please understand that all absolutes can be proven wrong by someone with the talent or ability to do so. So don't come up to me at a convention and say you created a great character that violates everything I've said here. I've done it. Every other writer has done it. I'm giving basic generalities, a guideline not a specific. Once you've learned to walk, run anywhere you want to. Now back to our story in progress...

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# THE RETAILER

BY MOBRE

THIS IS THE RETAILER...

PUBLISHER, DO YOU COPY?

COME IN, PUBLISHER...

I COPY, RETAILER. WHAT'S UP?

ABOUT THAT FLINT PERRY...

MYSELF AND THE REST OF THE COMIC SYNDICATE FEEL IT WOULD BE WISE TO TERMINATE HIM.

HOLD ON .. I'M GOING TO HAVE A MONSTER ROUGH HIM UP A BIT... BUT I NEED HIM ALIVE!!

NEGATIVE!! FLINT PERRY IS TO BE TERMINATED AS ORDERED BY THE DISTRIBUTOR!

HE'S TOO DANGEROUS TO LIVE!

RETAILER OVER AND OUT- CLICK!

SON OF A JACKAL PIG!!

FATHER...?

...IS ANYTHING WRONG?

YES, MY DAUGHTER...

I'M AFRAID THAT *FLINT PERRY* MUST BE EXECUTED!!

BUT FATHER!!! HE AND I ARE TO MARRY!!

DON'T CRY, MY DEAR...

WE WILL FIND YOU ANOTHER SUITOR. ONE MUCH BETTER THAN *FLINT PERRY*.

THERE IS NO ONE BETTER THAN FLINT!

I CAN'T JUST LET HIM DIE!!

*FAUWA!!* WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

TO SAVE FLINT PERRY!!

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# BACK ISSUE BITS

by *Kevin Ohlandt*

Marvel once again dominates the back issue market. This is in large part due to the mutants, as the cartoon television show continues to draw in new comic book readers. Anything associated with the mutants is selling. The limited series starring Gambit, Sabretooth and Deadpool have sold out. *X-Men Unlimited* #3, and *X-Men* #28, with Sabretooth joining, are important issues for X-Men fans. Old storylines are finally resolving, such as "Fathers and Sons" from *Cable* #6 to #8. The removal of Wolverine's adamantium skeleton in *X-Men* #25, and the aftermath in *Wolverine* #75, has fans in a frenzy. The cartoon comic, *X-Men Adventures*, draws the new readers in. This is an exciting time for the mutants and their fans.

Daredevil continues to enjoy his revival, both in his regular series and the Miller/Romita Jr. mini-series. *Daredevil* #319 to #322 and *The Man Without Fear* #1 to #3 are reported to sell out as soon as they are bought back by store owners. This has had a positive influence on the old Miller *Daredevil* issues, from #158 to #191, especially those with Elektra.

The critically acclaimed *Marvels* series has sold out just about everywhere. This Alex Ross painted series, showing superheroes from the civilians perspective, was the shot in the arm that Marvel needed.

Other mighty Marvel movers include the last issue of *Conan*, #275, the first Stephen Platt issues of *Moon Knight*, #55 to #57, the new direction for Doctor Strange in #60 and #61 of his title, and the death of Mister Fantastic in *Fantastic Four* #381. The Avengers went through a revival in 1993, and that trend should continue into the new year. Back issues from the early 1980s are slowly moving again. The last couple of issues of *Avengers West Coast*, #101 and #102 both sold out in many areas. The old *Star Wars* comic from Marvel is sought after again, most likely because of the new novel, *Star Wars: Truce at Bakura*.

The Dark Horse *Star Wars: Dark Empire* and *Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi*, are also seeing back issue movement. Most in demand, is the Platinum version of *Star Wars: Dark Empire* #1. The Legends imprint, for Dark Horse, has been received very well. *Dark Horse Presents* #80 (Art Adams *Monkeyman & O'Brien*), *Sin City: A Dame To Kill For* by Frank Miller, and *John Byrne's Next Men* #19 to #21, are being sought by curious readers. In contrast, The Comic's Greatest World has not gone over as well. The only ongoing title, *Out of the Vortex*, has only sold moderately well.

First it was Superman, then Batman, and now Green Lantern is going to experience major changes. Hal Jordan will no longer be a Green Lantern as of #50, and this storyline, which began in *Green Lantern* #48, is a complete sell-out. However, this has not affected back issue sales of other Green Lantern issues.

Superman and Batman back issue sales have slowed down considerably since the "Reign of the Supermen" and "Knightfall" revelations. The only noteworthy exception is *Batman Adventures*, based on the cartoon series.

*Sandman* will soon end as a continuous series, with Gaiman writing one-shots after the "Kindley Ones" story arc. This story will resolve lingering plotlines, such as the fate of Daniel Hall. Hall, who was introduced in *Sandman* #22, is closely connected with Morpheus. That puts this issue, and his second appearance in #40, in demand. *Sandman* continues to be on DC's back issue "best seller" list, even with six trade paperbacks reprinting most of the series.

*Spectre* is also strong on the back issue market. This series has developed a cult following, and many fans wish it was a Vertigo book. *Hawkman* and the *Metal Men* mini-series are still in high demand. Of special note is the recent interest in *Valor*, as the current storyline, "D.O.A.", forms the basis for DC's summer crossover, "Zero Hour".

Image is sliding down fast, with only *Spawn* and *WildC.A.T.S.* in favor with the fans. Back issues of *Spawn*, especially #2 and #4, sell out as soon as they come back to the stores. Jim Lee's *WildC.A.T.S.* is selling again because of his return to the series. *Shadowhawk*, *Youngblood*, *Team Youngblood*, *Cyberforce*, *Savage Dragon*, *Brigade* and *Prophet*, are all fading from fans minds.

Valiant is experiencing limited success with *Ninjak* #1, and *X-O Manowar* #25, the first appearance of the Armorines. Their latest issues still aren't selling as well as they did a year ago, although there is some signs of price stability creeping in. Series such as *Solar*, with the "Valiant Vision", and *Shadowman*, are holding their own in the back issue market.

Malibu's Ultraverse continues to dominate the independent back issue market, with *Prime* #2 still leading the pack. Other "prime" movers are *Hardcase* #1 and #2, and *Exiles* #3. Look for even more interest after the release of *Rune* and the "Break-Thru" crossover.

1994 should prove to be an interesting year in the comic book industry. The successes and failures of 1993, will form the basis for the market in the first part of 1994.

**Top Ten Recent Back Issues**
1. *Moon Knight* #55-57
2. *Daredevil* #319-322
3. *Prime* #2
4. *Marvels* #1-2
5. *Green Lantern* #48
6. *Fantastic Four* #381
7. *Sandman* #22
8. *Deadpool* #1-4
9. *Valor* #12-16
10. *Conan* #275

## CVM Flashback: January, 1986

*The cover feature was* Robotech: The Macross Saga *#7 by Comico. Eight years later,* Robotech *is now produced by Malibu, who are flying high with the popularity of their Ultraverse imprint, and the 1994 release of the new creator-owned Bravura*

**Top Ten Silver Age Back Issues**
1. *Daredevil* #1
2. *Fantastic Four* #48
3. *Amazing Fantasy* #15
4. *Amazing Spider-Man* #1
5. *Showcase* #4
6. *Fantastic Four* #1
7. *Showcase* #22
8. *Incredible Hulk* #1
9. *Uncanny X-Men* #1
10. *Avengers* #1

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